

He has already visited Syria and Egypt as part of a Middle East tour aimed at speeding up Israel's withdrawal from South Lebanon.

Greek tanker under tow after second Gulf attack

BAHRAIN (R) — The crippled Greek oil tanker *Nimera* was under tow Monday heading for Dubai after being hit twice in two days by missile attacks in the Gulf, shipping sources said.

The 111,688-ton vessel was set ablaze in an attack attributed to the Iraqis on Saturday, and was hit again in another air strike Sunday as salvage tugs clustered round it. Iraq claimed to have hit two "large naval targets" on Saturday and another large target and a smaller vessel Sunday.

The only confirmed hits reported by shipping and salvage sources were on the *Nimera*, blasted in the engine room as it sailed in ballast towards Iran's major oil export terminal at Kharg Island in the northern Gulf.

Sources said the attack came just after the fire aboard the tanker which had spread to the accommodation quarters had been brought under control.

Gale force winds whipping up the waters of the normally placid Gulf had hampered salvage efforts. The gale had eased to a strong north westerly wind with two-metre swells early Monday.

Shipping sources estimated it would take the *Nimera* about two days to reach Dubai in the United Arab Emirates for a full survey and damage assessment.

The number of casualties from the original attack was still not clear. Gulf sources said two people appeared to be missing, feared dead, while a salvage operator reported one crewman on the tanker had died. The other 25 crewmen abandoned ship.

There were no further casualties in Sunday's attack, in which an Iraqi jet appeared to have launched its missile from over the horizon.

"The first any of the salvagers knew about it was when there was a terrific blast on the starboard side," a salvage operator reported.

The tugs at the scene escaped unscathed — "it was a miracle no-one was hurt," a salvager said.

The *Nimera* is the 46th vessel independently confirmed to have been hit in strikes by both Iran and Iraq in the Gulf this year.

The tanker was struck south of Kharg Island, which Iraq has included in a unilaterally-declared war zone aimed at keeping shipping away from Iranian ports in their four-year-old war.

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NEW LOOK FOR WADI SAQRA — Design link Prince Shaker Street in Shamsani with the Fifth Circle (Al Ra'i photo)

Labour, Likud make last minute effort to save Israeli coalition

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres and leaders of the Likud Bloc made last-minute efforts Monday to prevent a small religious party from quitting the ruling coalition and provoking a crisis that could break apart the government.

"There is a crisis and there is danger in the national unity government," said Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who cut short a visit to the United States and flew home to prevent the walkout of the ultra-orthodox Sephardi Torah Guardians.

"This crisis is neither necessary nor justified and I hope it will be possible to find a solution either today or tomorrow," Mr. Shamir told reporters at an airport news conference.

Mr. Shamir's Likud Bloc is backing the claim by Torah Guardians leader Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz for full control of the Ministry of Interior.

Earlier, Mr. Peres met with Deputy Premier David Levy, a Likud leader, to discuss a com-

promise for averting the walkout by the Torah Guardians, which represents Jews of Middle East origin.

Mr. Peres raised several proposals and Mr. Levy will meet with him again later in the day after discussing the suggestions with representatives of Shas, the Hebrew acronym for Torah Guardians.

Likud leaders have warned in recent days that if the Torah Guardians bolted, they too would consider leaving the government.

Such a move could reduce his 97-seat majority in the 120-seat parliament and topple his government.

It was the first major political crisis for the seven-party coalition since the national unity government took office in September.

Mr. Peres' Labour Party and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud are the major partners in the coalition and are to switch jobs midway through the 50-month term of office.

Mr. Peretz, leader of the Torah

Guardians, submitted his resignation at a cabinet meeting on Sunday and it was to take effect Tuesday. Mr. Peretz was offered the post of Interior Minister but complained that the job had been stripped of most of its power over religious spending.

"It's no secret that we stand by our commitment to Shas," Mr. Levy told reporters Sunday. "The credibility of the Likud, its adherence to coalition agreements and its loyalty to a loyal partner is at stake."

Mr. Peretz is demanding full control of the Interior Ministry, which would give his party some influence over funding for religious institutions. He has rejected a compromise suggested by the Labour Party which would give the more moderate National Religious Party full control of religious spending.

Most Israeli newspaper analysts wrote Monday that Likud would not precipitate a cabinet crisis over a Shas walkout.

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Islamic ministers begin talks in Sanaa

SANAA (R) — Foreign Ministers representing some one billion Muslims began private talks here Monday ahead of an Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting in which Egypt will formally take part for the first time since its membership was suspended for making peace with Israel.

A last-minute move by Syria and other members to stop Egypt attending was defeated Sunday in a preparatory meeting of experts from 44 OIC member countries, conference sources said.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Maguid was among ministers due to arrive in the North Yemeni capital Monday for the four-day meeting starting Tuesday.

Delegates Sunday reached a consensus that the invitation to Egypt could not be revoked at any level below that of a summit conference, the sources said.

The Syrian representative had challenged the invitation and, pointing at the Egyptians across the table, declared: "We have an

Israeli delegation in our midst," they said. Iran, Libya and South Yemen supported the Syrian view, they added.

It was an OIC summit in the Moroccan city of Casablanca last January that agreed to end Egypt's isolation over its 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Iran boycotted that meeting and the three hardline Arab states walked out in protest at the decision to readmit Egypt.

The Sanaa meeting will discuss a massive 106-item agenda covering political, economic and cultural issues of importance to the Islamic World, which extends from Morocco in the West to Indonesia in the East.

The list of subjects includes the four-year-old Gulf war between Iran and Iraq and the organisation's unsuccessful attempts to mediate a peace settlement between the two OIC members.

A high-level OIC peace committee has made numerous trips to Baghdad and Tehran but, like peace initiatives by other bodies, it

is largely in abeyance now because of the lack of response from Iran.

The conference spokesman, OIC Assistant Secretary-General Ibrahim Al-Zaman of Pakistan, said the foreign ministers would also discuss moves to settle disputes between Islamic states.

The conference is the most important ever held in Sanaa, a 2,000-year-old city perched on a plateau about 2,500 metres above sea level and with a population of 300,000.

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Egypt edges closer to Arabs one year after Arafat visit

By Hamza Hendawi
Reuters



Yasser Arafat

CAIRO — One year after Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat paid a ground-breaking visit to Cairo, Egypt now senses its isolation from the Arab mainstream has all but ended.

Officials here said the Dec. 22 trip last year by Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), after Syrian-backed PLO radicals drove him from Lebanon, is seen by President Hosni Mubarak and his advisers as the catalyst of gradual rapprochement in the 12 months since.

Only Syria, Libya and perhaps South Yemen, among the Arab majority that severed relations with Cairo over its 1979 peace treaty with Israel, still make more than a formality of ostracising Egypt, they said.

Radicals still block an Arab League move to waive its ruling that members should not have relations with Cairo.

But officials here said many League members are only inhibited from following Jordan's lead in unilaterally restoring links three months ago by not wanting to aggravate inter-Arab rifts.

"With the exception of Libya, Syria and possibly South Yemen, Arab states largely endorse our present policies on the Arab-Israeli conflict with some even opposed to terminating our peace with Israel," one senior official said.

Officials say Egypt's contacts with other Arab states were renewed when Mr. Mubarak succeeded the late Anwar Sadat who signed the U.S.-sponsored treaty with Israel.

"Most Arab leaders, however, have good reasons not to make known their endorsement of Egypt's policies and that is something we can understand," the senior official said.

He cited as one reason for this their concern over angry reaction by hardliners Libya and Syria and

new Arab rifts in face of the generally perceived threat from Israel and Iran.

Mr. Mubarak himself has discouraged speculation of an emergent "moderate" Arab axis of Egypt, Jordan and Iraq, with the Arafat-led PLO, that might line up against the radicals.

He said Egypt did not believe in forming axes but only wanted to help revive the Middle East peace process adding "we welcome any Arab country that wants to join us."

On a Kuwaiti press report that he would meet King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein early in 1995, he said: "It is merely news that I have read in the Arab press."

The senior Egyptian official said Egypt has consulted Saudi Arabia through governmental envoys. The Saudi attitude is that it wants Egypt back in the Arab fold, but that Jordan should have awaited an Arab consensus.

Iraq, the official said, favours convening a delayed Arab summit to reach such a consensus but "if such a forum fails to agree on the issue, Iraq will decide to restore ties with Egypt," he said.

Egypt seeks its return to good relations with Arab states without jeopardising the close relationship with the United States, forged after the U.S.-mediated Camp David accord with Israel.

Swiss to handle Yugoslav interests in Morocco

BERNE (R) — The Swiss government said Monday it had agreed to represent Yugoslav interests in Morocco following the breakdown of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

A spokesman for the Yugoslav embassy in Berne said Morocco had unilaterally severed links with Belgrade two weeks ago after Yugoslavia's decision to recognise

the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

"The republic was proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas who have been waging a long-standing war with the Moroccan government for control of the Western Sahara."

A statement from the Swiss Foreign Ministry said Morocco had agreed to the Swiss representation.

Denktash arrives in Ankara

ANKARA (R) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash arrived in Ankara Monday for talks with the Turkish government and to seek its continued support.

He said he would explain to Turkish leaders his views on the Cyprus draft agreement reached in United Nations talks this month and "request their further sup-

port," Anatolia News Agency reported.

But referring to the meeting he will have next month with Greek Cypriot leader Spyros Kyprianou, Mr. Denktash warned he would not accept any terms that risked the oppression which Turkish Cypriots say they suffered until the 1974 Turkish invasion of the island.

NEWS IN BRIEF

CAEU, ACDIMA discuss projects

AMMAN (Petra) — Promoting joint Arab work and possibility of expanding joint Arab projects to serve Arab integration were the main subjects of discussion Monday during a meeting between Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) Secretary General Mahdi Al Obeidi and Mr. Muwaffaq Haddadin, director general of the Arab Company for Drug Industries and Medical Appliances (ACDIMA). ACDIMA was established by virtue of a resolution adopted by the CAEU in 1976, with a shared capital of Kuwaiti dinars 60 million, to which 16 Arab countries including Jordan have contributed.

ALO to hold talks in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Progress of work at the Arab Labour office and evaluation of its achievements will be discussed during the 18th session of the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO), which will be held in Baghdad next Sunday. Participants in the week-long meeting will also discuss implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the general conference and the specialised agencies. They will also discuss drawing up a draft agenda of the forthcoming conference, in cooperation with the Arab Labour Office and will discuss the organisation's budget.

Pope meets Jalloud

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul Monday met Maj. Abdul Salam Jalloud, second in command to Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, the Vatican said. As is customary with private Papal audiences, the Vatican did not release any details of what the two men discussed.

UAE to boost border security

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) cabinet decided Monday to boost security at the federation's borders and entry points, the official Emirates News Agency said. It said the decision followed a review of a memorandum on the subject submitted by the Ministry of Interior, but gave no details of the new security measures.

Conference to discuss transplantation

RIYADH (Petra) — The second international conference on transplantation of organs in the Middle East started Monday at the Saudi Arabian Armed Forces Hospital in Riyadh. Taking part in the conference are surgeons from nine countries in Europe, America and Australia, in addition to a number of specialists from the Arab World. During the three-day conference they will discuss a number of lectures about transplantation of human organs in general and transplantation of kidneys in particular.

Honecker begins visit to Algeria

PARIS (R) — East German President Erich Honecker arrived in Algiers Monday for a three-day official visit and political talks with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, the Algerian News Agency (APS) reported.

The agency, monitored in Paris, said Mr. Honecker's visit would be a chance to discuss the "difficulties and hazards of economic cooperation."

The visit would also be used to give new impetus to bilateral cooperation in the oil, trade, health, transport, housing and agriculture sectors, the agency added.

The three-day visit completes a busy foreign affairs programme this year during which Mr. Honecker improved ties with NATO governments and strengthened his country's foothold in Africa by extended aid to Ethiopia.

Algerian President Chadli Benjedid called for closer economic cooperation in an interview published on the front page of the East German Communist Party newspaper Neues Deutschland, hinting that trade agreements were expected. The current five-year protocol expires in 1995.

"Clearly the scope for trade between our countries is far from exhausted," Mr. Chadli said.

Algeria is an important market for East German engineering goods and exports large quantities of oil, fruit and wine in return.

Algerian oil deliveries to East Germany have assumed particular importance since the Soviet Union, East Berlin's major supplier of energy, began cutting oil supplies and raising prices to world market levels in the early 1980s.

TV & RADIO

JORDAN TELEVISION

MAIN CHANNEL

17:00 Koran
17:10 Cartoons
17:30 Children's Programmes
18:30 Sport
19:30 Programmes
19:40 News Programme
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Local Programmes
22:15 Programmes Review
23:30 News in Arabic
23:50 Series Contin.

FOREIGN CHANNEL

18:00 German Programme
19:00 News in French
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Top Ten
21:00 Science International
21:10 Cottage to Let
22:00 News in English
22:15 The Yellow Rose

RADIO JORDAN

855 KHz. AM & 99 MHz. FM
partly on 95.60 KHz. SW

07:00 Light Music
07:30 News Desk
08:00 Morning Show
10:00 News Summary
10:30 Morning Show
11:00 Pop Session
12:00 News Summary
12:30 Pop Session
13:00 News Summary
13:30 Pop Session
14:00 News Bulletin
14:30 Science Fiction
15:00 Concert Hour
15:30 News Summary
16:00 Instrumentals
16:30 Old Favourites
17:00 Science Report
17:30 Pop Session
18:00 News Summary
18:30 Top Twenty
19:00 News Summary
19:30 Date with a Star
20:00 Evening Show
21:00 News Summary
21:30 News Summary
22:00 Evening Show
22:30 News Headlines
23:00 Evening Show
23:30 News Headlines

BBC WORLD SERVICE

639, 720, 1413 KHz

06:00 Newsdesk 06:30 The Classical
06:45 Financial News 06:55 Reflections 07:00 World News 07:15
07:30 News Summary 07:30 News Desk
07:45 Book Choice 07:45 The World
08:00 Newsdesk 08:30 Rock
08:45 World News 09:00 24
09:15 News Summary 09:30 Newsdesk
09:45 World News 10:00 World
10:15 News 10:30 Reflections 10:45
11:00 Music in the Age of Chivalry 11:30
11:45 Oscar Night 11:50 World
12:00 News 12:15 British Press Review 12:15
12:30 World Today 12:30 Financial News
12:45 Look Ahead 12:45 What's New
13:00 News Summary 13:00 News
13:15 World News Summary followed by
13:30 World News 13:30 News
13:45 World News 13:45 News
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WHAT'S GOING ON

TODAY'S EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

* An exhibition of oil and water colour paintings, ceramics and wood carvings by Amman Al Jamal and Mohammed Samara at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 17).

* An art exhibition of oils and watercolours by Nelly (Soviet) at 6:00 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre (until Dec. 22).

* Annual book exhibition at Yarmouk University (until Dec. 19).

* An exhibition of ornaments by Sabah Urtag Al Rashid at 5:00 p.m. at the Regency Palace Hotel.

* A Palestinian national documentary exhibition at 4:00 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 24).

FILM

* Italian film week at 8:00 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 21).

* News review at 7:00 p.m. at American Centre.

CULTURAL CENTRES

Royal Cultural Centre Tel. 661/0267
American Centre 44371
British Council 41520
French Cultural Centre 36147-8
German Cultural Centre 37009
Goethe Institute 41993
Soviet Cultural Centre 44203
Spanish Cultural Centre 24049
Turkish Cultural Centre 39777
Hayat Arts Centre 665195
Hussein Youth City 667181
Y.W.C.A. 41793
Y.M.C.A. 664251
Amman Municipal Library 36111
University of Jordan Library 843555

CHURCHES

St. Joseph Church (Roman Catholic) Jabel Amman, Tel. 24590.
Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) Jabel Lureibeh, 37440.
De la Salle Church (Roman Catholic) Jabel Hussein, 661757.
Church of the Annunciation (Greek Orthodox) Abdali, 23541.
Anglican Church (Church of the Redemptor) Jabel Amman, 41559.
Armenian Catholic Church Ashrafieh, 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Ashrafieh, 775261.
St. Ephraim Church (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh, 771751.
Armenian International Church (Inter-denominational) meets at Southern Baptist School in Shamsani, 816534.

MUSEUMS

Folklore Museum Jewelry and costumes over 100 years old. Also mosaics from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 18th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman. Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5 p.m. Year-round. Tel. 51760.

PRAYER TIMES

06:00 Fajr
06:31 Sunrise (Shamsi) Duha
11:32 Noon
14:17 Asr
18:31 Maghrib
18:41 Isha

FOR THE TRAVELLER

AMMAN AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Alia information department at the Queen Alia International Airport tel. (06) 53350, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

06:50 Cairo (MS)
07:00 Beirut (RJ)
07:30 Dubai (RJ)
07:45 Kuwait (RJ)
07:55 Jeddah (RJ)
08:00 Cairo (RJ)
08:05 Dhahran (RJ)
08:15 Dubai, Bahrain (RJ)
08:20 Muscat, Doha (RJ)
08:30 Larnaca, Damascus (RJ)
08:35 Beirut (RJ)
08:45 Dhahran, Riyadh (SV)
08:50 Singapore, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:00 Doha (GF)
09:10 Moscow (SU)
09:15 Kuwait (KU)
09:20 Baghdad (IA)
09:25 New York, Vienna (RJ)
09:30 Amsterdam, Istanbul (KLM)
09:35 Tripoli (RJ)
09:40 Zurich, Athens (SR)
09:45 Athens (OA)
09:50 Rome, Damascus (AZ)
09:55 Frankfurt, Damascus (LH)
10:00 Cairo (MS)
10:05 Cairo (RJ)
10:10 Baghdad (RJ)

DEPARTURES

06:45 Cairo (RJ)
07:00 Beirut (RJ)
07:15 Agiba (RJ)
07:30 Cairo (MS)
07:45 Tripoli (RJ)
07:55 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
08:00 Paris, London (RJ)
08:05 Athens, New York (RJ)
08:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (SV)
08:15 Istanbul, Bucharest (RJ)
08:20 Frankfurt, Copenhagen (RJ)
08:25 Rome (RJ)
08:30 Bahrain (GF)
08:35 Cairo (RJ)
08:40 Moscow (SU)
08:45 Kuwait (KU)
08:50 Baghdad (IA)
08:55 Swiss franc 45.4
09:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:05 Cairo (RJ)
09:10 Baghdad (RJ)
09:15 Bangkok (RJ)
09:20 Cairo (MS)

MARITIME TRAFFIC

Regular-line ships docking at Aqaba port:

--- Jarash
--- Konakdoris
--- North West
--- Farah One
--- Iole C
--- Kozu Wilaya
--- Mont Ventoux

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology:

There will be slight increase in temperature, with southeasterly moderate winds. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Low/high temperature in deg.C

Amman 21/21
Aqaba 25/21
Deserts 19/16
Jordan Valley 10/21

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Syrian lra 40.2
Amman 61 per cent. Aqaba 37 per cent.

MONEY EXCHANGE

Local sell/buy rates in Jls

Belgian franc 64.71 / 65
Dutch guilder 115.2 / 115.9
Egyptian guinea 310.6 / 313.8
French franc 42.4 / 42.6
Iraqi dinar 333.3 / 337.5
Italian lire (for 100) 21.1 / 21.3
Japanese yen (for 100) 162.2 / 163.1
Kuwaiti dinar 132.6 / 133.6
Lebanese lira 45.4 / 46.8
Omani rial 115.9 / 116.3
Qatari riyal 110.3 / 111.1
Saudi riyal 113 / 113.6
Swedish crown 45.4 / 45.8
Swiss franc 45.4 / 45.8
Syrian lra 40.2 / 40.1
U.A.E. dirham 108.9 / 110
U.K. sterling pound 47.9 / 48.1
U.S. dollar 402 / 404
W. German mark

Financial consortium opens in London

LONDON (Petra) — A Jordanian financial consortium was officially opened here Monday with a capital shared jointly by the Jordanian government and 16 Jordanian banks and financial institutions.

A spokesman for the consortium said that the establishment of a joint Jordanian financial consortium in London arises from the necessity to establish a Jordanian banking and financial base which will work on strengthening bridges of confidence between Jordan and the

countries of the world in the field of banking.

The spokesman added that this consortium will receive deposits from Arab and international surpluses and will use them to finance development projects in Jordan.

Attending the inauguration of the consortium were a number of senior Jordanian officials from Jordanian banks and financial institutions, a number of businessmen and economists and several directors of Arab development funds and central banks in the Arab World.

Arar requests governors to assist planning teams

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Suleiman Arar has requested provincial governors to take the necessary steps to facilitate the work of teams conducting a comprehensive survey of cities, villages and population gatherings in the country.

The survey, being conducted by the Ministry of Planning, started earlier this week and aims to review suggestions for developing local communities' economic and social aspects as well as including projects which have been proved feasible in the third five-year development plan 1986-1990.

Altogether, 1,018 towns and villages will be surveyed for, the information which will be used by planners for the implementation of the coming development plan.

The survey will help define the basic needs of the local communities in every district and the infrastructure required for the implementation of economic projects in every town and village.

The gathered information will be reviewed and scrutinised by the ministry in cooperation with other ministries involved in the preparation of the five-year plan.

Nabulsi asks village councils to prepare data for projects

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Hamdullah Al Nabulsi has requested all municipal and village councils in the country to prepare information and data about development projects which have been carried out in each city and village during the past five years. The minister also requested the preparation of a list of industrial, trading and crafts institutes registered in these councils in addition to the projects which councils propose to be taken into consideration while preparing the new five-year development

plan. Mr. Nabulsi also requested the Cities and Villages Development Bank to provide JD 320,000 in loans to four local councils to enable them to carry out service projects. The request included lending Tareq Municipality a sum of JD 200,000 to open streets, lending Aqaba Municipality JD 20,000 to build a trading centre, lending Um Jozza village council in Balqa a sum of JD 20,000 to pay compensations and lending Al Mreigha village council in Ma'an the sum of JD 80,000 to construct streets.

Obeidat: Time has come for local government

(Continued from page 1)

there was coordination between the government and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and that "we are committed to bear our responsibilities" in extending services to the camp.

Mr. Obeidat also praised efforts exerted by the Salt Development Corporation saying that it was "a positive initiative contributing to the development of the local society."

In the agricultural sector, Mr. Obeidat said: "I would like to assure our citizens that we feel a special responsibility" towards the sector. He pointed out to the problems facing this sector, demanding more collective efforts to achieve a comprehensive agricultural development in the Kingdom.

He explained that the Higher Agricultural Council has adopted resolutions among which was the implementation of a modern agricultural plan in the Jordan Valley area and hilly agricultural areas in the Kingdom.

The council will be holding a meeting on Dec. 29 to crystallise resolutions to serve the agricultural sector in the Kingdom.

Delivering a speech at the session, Balqa Governor Mohammad Khatib stressed the concept of decentralisation in government departments and institutions and called for the idea of maintaining a separate budget for spending in each governorate.

Mr. Khatib reviewed problems suffered by the Balqa Governorate and the shortage in basic public services. He said that providing these services to the governorate could ease population problems in Amman and attract a larger number of citizens to reside in the governorate.

He stressed the necessity of improving roads in the governorate, mainly the Salt-Shouneh road and the Salt-Ardah road. He also called on the government to solve the pollution problem caused by the Jordan Cement Companies Factory in Fuhais and for adopting comprehensive plans to develop tourism, agriculture, roads and the environment.

The deputy for the Balqa Governorate at the Lower House of Parliament, Marwan Hmoud, delivered a speech in which he called on the government to develop and improve social and cultural services in the governorate, mainly in the field of education.

Salt Mayor Abdul Razzaq Nsour, in his turn, delivered a speech in which he reviewed the needs of his city and the achievements realised by the municipality, mainly in the area of

opening roads, electricity, preservation of the environment, establishment of commercial centres with the cost of JD 600,000, generating an annual income of JD 60,000.

Dr. Nsour said the municipality has already started implementing a sports village project and that it had appropriated 70 dunums of land for this purpose.

Dr. Nsour reviewed the needs of the city of Salt, mainly in regards improving the city's entrance, housing projects and the organisation of lands adjacent to the city.

The president of the board of directors of the Salt Development Corporation, Ja'far Shami, explained in a speech the present and future plans of the corporation aimed at development of the city.

He called for establishing a tourism project in Zai and programmes to develop agricultural projects in the same area.

Demands and inquiries by officials and citizens of the governorate were directed by Mr. Obeidat to the concerned cabinet members for replies and explanation.

In response to an inquiry, Minister of Public Works Raef Nijm said his ministry was in the process of developing and improving the road network in the governorate and reviewed the ministry's plans in this regard. He said the 1985 state budget includes an increase in allocations for road construction in the Kingdom, including agricultural roads.

Dr. Nijm said the ministry is currently carrying out a study for an alternative road to the Salt-Ardah road.

Agriculture Minister Mohammad Bashir spoke of his ministry's plans to develop the animal wealth in the Kingdom and said there is a plan to organise agricultural production to guarantee the proper marketing of agricultural products and the provision of technical expertise needed by farmers.

Speaking at the five-hour session, held at the Salt Community College, Education Minister Hikmat Saket reviewed efforts exerted by the ministry to develop and modernise education methods including the upgrading of the quality of education in the Kingdom.

Health Minister Kamel Ajlouni said the ministry was ready to press ahead with the programme of developing medical services in the governorate within a carefully studied programme. He laid down the ministry's plans to develop the Salt government hospital and the health centre in southern Shouneh.

Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Zaben said a tender

NEWS IN BRIEF

Abdul Jaber receives invitation to Egypt

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Labour and Social Development Tayseer Abdul Jaber Monday discussed with the Egyptian ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Ihab Wahbeh, bilateral relations and means of strengthening cooperation in the fields of labour and social development. Mr. Wahbeh extended an invitation to the Egyptian minister of labour and training inviting Dr. Abdul Jaber to visit Egypt.

Arar issues new licencing requirement

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Suleiman Arar Monday decided to ban the licencing or renewing of licences for public vehicles unless owners of these vehicles produce a receipt to the effect that they have paid the due municipal fees. The decision takes effect as of the beginning of 1985.

Jordanian student dies in India

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received a cable from the Jordanian embassy in New Delhi saying that a Jordanian student, Mohammad Hassan Shihadeh, has passed away. The ministry called on his family to call at the consular department at the ministry.

Municipality, ACC discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Cooperation between Amman Municipality and the Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC) was discussed Monday during a meeting between Amman Mayor Abdul Rauf Al Rawabdeh and the chairman and members of the ACC.

Designers review aspects of Islamic architecture

AMMAN (Petra) — An Islamic and Jordanian architecture seminar resumed its sessions Monday at the Professional Associations Complex and discussed a number of working papers on this topic. The first paper discussed during the session was submitted by Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Under Secretary Awad Al Tal in which he called for reconsidering the planning policy of the Arab city and for the highlighting Islamic planning and architectural values in designing buildings.

Another working paper, was submitted by Amman Municipality, dealt with Amman and the planning of Islamic Arab cities. The paper pointed out that some Arab cities do not carry any Arab or Islamic features due to their rapid and random development and due to the scattering of buildings within the city. The paper also recommended that large projects should be established using Islamic architectural designs. One of Monday's papers included a document by Mr. Ja'far Toukan from the private sector in which he presented a detailed account of modern, Arab and Islamic architecture.

On the last day of the seminar, a recommendation committee will make a draft of some of the more relevant proposals made about Islamic and Jordanian architecture and these will be read and approved on at the final session.

Speaking at the meeting were also director of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Munther Haddadin and Housing Corporation Director Shafiq Zawaideh who answered citizens' inquiries related to their respective departments.

In response to other speeches delivered by heads of municipal and rural councils, Mr. Obeidat said the government will be studying their requests and complaints.

He said the government will study the possibility of establishing a chicken slaughter house in the governorate and that instructions have been issued to set up a committee to supervise efforts to fight the problem of insects in the Jordan Valley in summer.

Mr. Obeidat said the government will work to develop the organisational system at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment to enable it handle better structural plans for cities and villages.



A visiting delegation from the Commission of the European Community Monday held a press conference on cooperation between the EC and Jordan (Petra photo)

Ministry, companies discuss phosphate, potash marketing

AMMAN (Petra) — Means of coordinating and intensifying efforts, policies and steps geared at marketing the products of the phosphate, potash and fertiliser companies in foreign markets and increasing exports of these materials were discussed during a meeting between Minister of Industry and Trade Jawad Al Anani and the chairman and directors of the three companies.

Participants also discussed the possibilities of increasing exports

EC, Energy Ministry to sign JD 170,000 technical aid deal

AMMAN (Petra) — Director General of Energy at the Commission of European Community (EC) and head of an EC delegation Christopher Audland, Monday paid tribute to the economic renaissance Jordan is witnessing in all fields.

Mr. Audland, who was speaking at a press conference at the EC headquarters in Amman, said that his visit to Jordan is part of a tour which will take him to other countries in the area with the aim of discussing means of cooperation between states in the area and the European Common Market.

Mr. Audland added that he held talks with Jordanian officials on possibilities of providing Jordan with technical, financial and advisory assistance, particularly in the field of energy.

Mr. Audland also said that the EC and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources will Tuesday sign an agreement whereby the EC will provide Jordan with technical and financial assistance

worth JD 170,000 to benefit the energy projects in Jordan.

Mr. Audland then reviewed the assistance that the EC has provided to Jordan in the fields of electricity projects, universities and scientific institutions.

Mr. Audland also pointed out the various methods the EC countries have applied to reduce their consumption of energy by 20 per cent and added that they could cooperate with Jordan in this field to help Jordan reduce its energy consumption.

During his visit Mr. Audland met with Minister of Planning Abdullah Al Nsour and discussed cooperation between EC countries and Jordan in economic, financial and technical fields.

Haya centre gives children a busy, educational week

By Rana Sabbagh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Haya Arts Centre for Child Development has organised a cultural and art week for children. This event consisted of a children's play, "The Little Police Boy", an exhibition of children's paintings as well as a scientific "outer-space" cartoon show.

The children's play, written by Sami Al Majali and directed by Na'im Haddadin, transported the audience, mainly little children, into a land of fantasy and happiness. The dramatic action in the play itself was carried out professionally by the main actors, all of whom were children. The young audience managed to understand every single idea in the play as the dialogue was in colloquial Arabic and the moral of the play was easily transmitted from the children acting to the children watching.

This play aimed to break down some of the barriers between policemen and citizens by "pointing" out the good deeds of the police such as how they catch criminals and thus how they maintain citizens' rights and social justice. The theme also had direct sub-messages such as: Follow the path of good and never listen to evil, people should never steal, no matter how poor they are and, added to this, an important didactic ideal that children should never lie.

Nawaf, the main character played

by Nassim Magdalawi aged 11, was great fun and monopolised the whole dramatic action and atmosphere. He even managed to break the psychological barrier between the audience and the actors by making the children become active in the dialogue and actions of the play. Nawaf was constantly consulting the children about what to do with the robbers, where to hide etc. He also made all the children join in and sing a song called "Tomorrow, I want to become a Policeman". Nawaf would also use the technique of ad-libbing, in which he carried dialogues with the children. Nawaf was certainly the man of the show.

Nassim told the Jordan Times that he enjoyed playing the part of Nawaf especially because he could consult the audience, raise their curiosity, and encourage them to react to the play.

The evil witch

The witch, played by Noor Imam, appeared in a black gown with frightening facial make up which caused some of the younger children to cry whenever she appeared on stage. However the older children reacted in the opposite manner and laughed which had a calming effect on their little companions.

The set, designed by Hassan Kambahawi, was very simple, yet creative. The back-drop, por-



His Highness Prince Rashid (centre front), son of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, watches a play during the Haya Arts Centre children's week (Petra photo)

trayed a village scene with a well, a hut, a tree and jars as well as a large cowshed. The witch's house was effectively creepy-looking with dark colours and phosphoric paints to create a dramatic atmosphere whenever spot lights were shed on it.

Director Na'im Haddadin told the Jordan Times that the play aims to stimulate the creative side of children's minds and imaginations to encourage them to respond to the action. He added that "children are very intelligent only, if parents do not repress their ideas and allow them to say what they think."

Excellent music was played by Mr. Taha Rashid on the piano. Mr. Rashid accompanied the actors and played music that reflected the actions of the play by creating suspense as well as helping the children in singing songs.

Ahmad Odeis, ten years old, commented on the play saying: "I loved the play because it teaches children not to steal and lie. In the future, I want to become a police man."

Actors who participated in the show were: Lina Lamma, Dalia Khamra, Sami Khader, Majida Dahabreil, Murad Zu'bi and Wael Khamra.

The children also had the chance to see a scientific documentary on stars, planets, the rotation of the earth around the sun as well as space ships and astronauts. The children's books and paintings exhibition was another popular aspect of this one-week show on the occasion of the celebrations for the Haya Arts Centre's eighth year. Arabic and English books on display were concerned with science, religion, fiction stories and scientific encyclopaedias.

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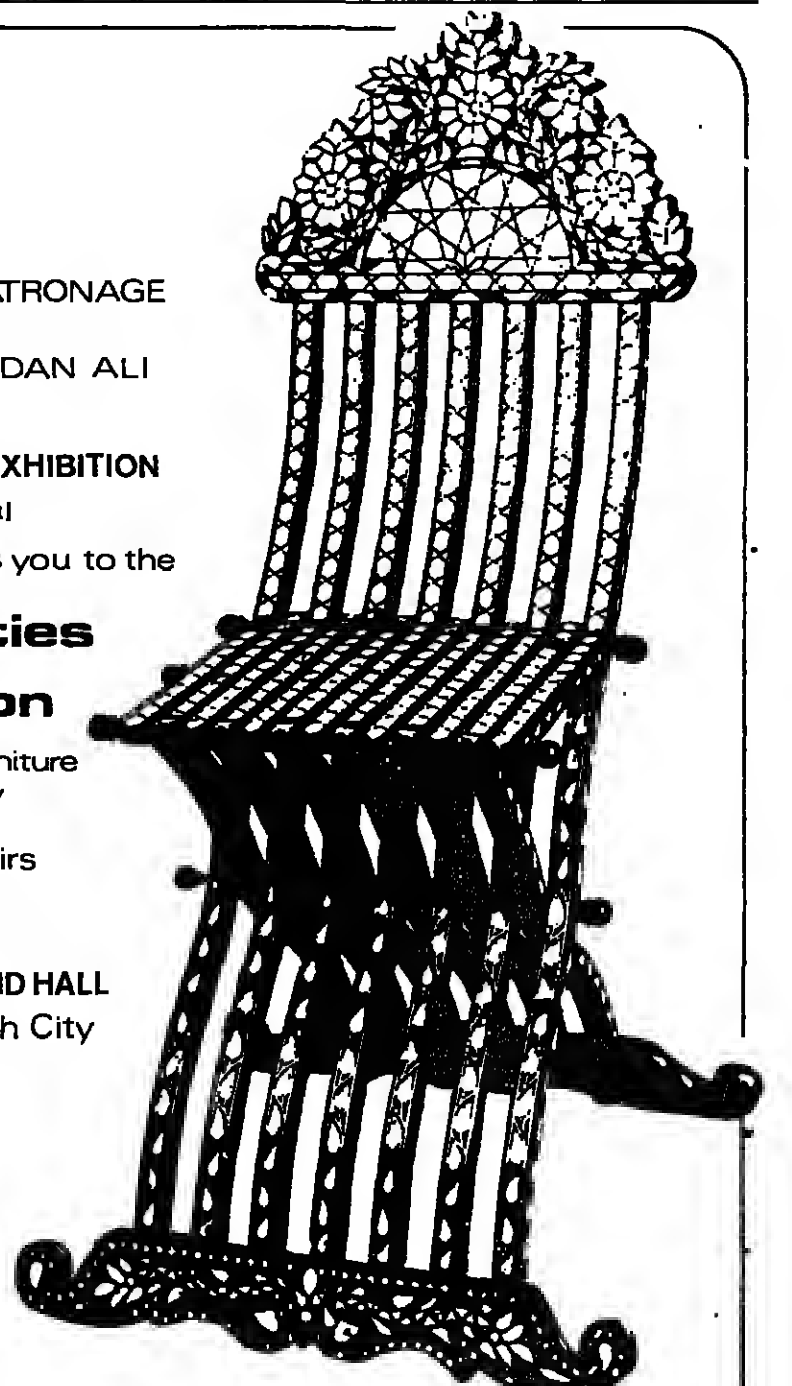
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Blocking peace moves

UNDER NORMAL circumstances, it would be difficult to understand why the U.S. is opposed to holding an international peace conference on the Middle East. It beats us that a country that keeps telling the world it so desires peace for this region refuses to attend the best forum for discussing and attaining this objective.

Alas, these are not normal circumstances. And the U.S. and Israel are simply marking time when everybody else, particularly the centrist forces of the Arab World, are desperately trying to preempt a major catastrophe from happening in the area.

Instead of trying to inject some level-headed realism into the thinking of its client state, the U.S. is even abandoning its own political morality in favour of taking its cue from Israel. It is nonsense that Washington opposes the idea of the international conference simply because the setting might not be right "for advancing constructive exchanges," just as it is foolhardy to believe that the Americans oppose the idea because the conference would give a say to the Soviet Union in any settlement that would follow.

First, Jordan, which has been pushing so hard for convening such a conference, has made it well known that the idea of all parties to the conflict getting together under one umbrella does not in itself mean that they will be locked in a smoke-filled room shouting slogans and trading accusations at each other. Far from it, the conference itself will merely be a framework in which all sorts of committees, experts and panels will do their work to achieve something tangible and substantial, away from cameras and rhetoric. Where is the wrong setting in such an arrangement?

Secondly, the U.S., perhaps more than any other country concerned, should know the value of Soviet participation in any attempt to solve the Palestinian problem. Washington is surely aware that Moscow would rather support moderate and workable positions than stand behind empty slogans and bankrupt ambitions by any and all sides to the conflict. So, why should Washington object to having the Soviets playing a constructive role in the search for a settlement?

It is plainly the Israeli position against the conference that the U.S. is now echoing in opposition to the only practical way for a Middle East solution. That in itself helps neither the cause of peace nor the image of the U.S. as an honest broker in the region.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Echoing Zionist intentions

THE CURRENT session of the United Nations General Assembly has given the international community another chance to realise the real position of the United States vis-a-vis the Middle East problem and the American insistence to block all roads leading to justice, stability and peace in this troubled region of the world.

The call to convene an international peace conference did not emanate from a void, neither was it announced before experience proved the failure of the unilateral American effort in search for a just and balanced settlement to the problem. It is the failure that is not attributed to the lack of capabilities but to the lack of will. The U.S. which supposed to be a power for peace and justice, has chosen to give up its role and stand in the Zionist bunker, ignoring all United Nations resolutions and international consensus.

This American choice made it natural for the Arabs to look at Washington. Through its stands and intentions, which it makes very clear, it aims to impose surrender and humiliation on Arabs while at the same time opening all chances to its Zionist military base to expand its power on the Arab decision, wealth and all aspirations that are Arab rights, as it is the case with all peoples of the world. This American attitude with all its inclusions of challenge and insult has allowed Arabs to see the U.S. as a biased agent to the Zionist entity.

Therefore, it was only natural and reasonable that Jordan called specifically to return the peace cause to the United Nations and that all parties concerned have their role in the search for the accepted formula that is capable of achieving stability and justice. The American rejection of the idea of the international conference is a manifestation of the joint American-Zionist joint rejection for any peace that does not carry the specifications and conditions in favour of Washington and Tel Aviv: the "peace" under which Arabs agree to give up their land and any other land that the U.S. and the Zionist entity see should be abducted. In other words, according to Washington and Tel Aviv's specifications, it is required from the Arabs to accept now, tomorrow and forever all that the two sides in this alliance see necessary to impose, abduct or approve. What is asked here is a peace with Zionist greed which has proved unlimited and endless. Such a peace could never be achieved and could never be imposed because it is against the peoples' march and the many and rich lessons of history.

Sawt Al Shaab: Resistance will continue

TERRORIST ACTS and savage butcheries committed by the Israeli occupation authorities everywhere in the occupied Arab territories are but a part of the malicious Israeli thinking which adopts the method of violence and terror as means to achieve its goals and as an attempt to subdue the Arab will which rejects the principle of occupation, expansion and aggression.

The invasion by occupation forces of Lebanese villages in the south and the destruction of houses on the heads of its inhabitants of women, children and old people, was nothing but a ring in the chain of arbitrary measures which are trying to suffocate the spirit of resistance to the Lebanese south. It is also an attempt to divert the current that turned the southern area into a base for heroes who destroyed the invasion plan from its roots and buried the dreams and promises that "Sharon", the architect of the invasion, tried to reach within the Israeli policy of apartheid in the Arab territories.

The national Lebanese resistance has come in time to join the formula of the complicated Lebanese crisis. It is the only element capable of putting things into order and correcting the situation and the crisis in a way that guarantees Lebanon the beginning of the phase of restoring national unity and total sovereignty on its territories.

The Lebanese resistance has imposed on all parties to renounce the May 17 agreement and for the first time it imposed on Israel to negotiate its way out of the real mess that it found itself in, also for the first time — a destructive and costly war of attrition on all levels. In the same way, it has also imposed on Lebanon new calculations in a new political formula capable of pulling it out of the circle of hegemony and foreign influence.

From this point it can be said that the stepping up of Israeli terrorist acts in south Lebanon and the attempt to pressure the resistance through the series of mass murders, aims at forcing Lebanon into a new agreement that digests its rights, sovereignty and dignity through a deal which is currently being prepared at the Naqura military negotiations.

The Lebanese southeners have offered Lebanon the country and the entity the chance to manoeuvre and pressure leaving no chance for doubt that the south can be described as a process of "biting fingers" between Israel and the resistance.

The Israeli logic which is based on planting terror and fear in the hearts in order to pass a political deal on the expense of Lebanon, its sovereignty and unity, will not be in line with the Israeli vision and through declared and undeclared political deals. The Lebanese resistance is continuing and will continue no matter how much terror there will be.

An epitaph for Wadi Saqra Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

EVERY DAY, I passed him, like a good friend, on my way to work, and again on my way back home. He was always there, a fixed, sturdy signpost in my life, a point of reference to which I came back again and again to assess the progress of my life, my work, my allotted time in this world. Every time I saw him and gave a little nod as I passed in my car, I remembered times past, and episodes we had shared. I remembered the last time I passed him during a pouring thunder shower, in show, or on an uncomfortable summer's day with the hot east wind blowing in off the desert. He was even becoming a marker in the lives of my sons, a junction from where they measured both the route to their home and the path to life's mysteries and experiences. I do not know how to answer my children when they ask me where he has gone to. It is a question I hope they will postpone, to give me time to provide a satisfactory answer to myself, as well as to them.

He was always there, never complaining, rarely changing. Oh, sure, sometimes he looked a bit fed up with the world. He even carried a few scars of the times he had been mistreated, even physically abused by some of the many people who came in contact with him every day. But he stood up to his special lot in life rather well, I thought. Here, I said to myself, was one special, durable friend I could always count on. I could

go away for a while, go to Aqaba or Petra for a few days, even travel abroad for a few weeks or months, and when I returned to Amman I would always find him in his same place. As I passed him on my way to work every morning, he would remind me that there were some constant things in life.

I suspect that I was not the only one. Many others must have related to him in the same way: thousands of others, in fact, though I have no way of knowing whether they share my feelings about losing this old friend. Now, in the winter of 1984, but in the early adolescence of his life, his time with us is almost over. Soon, he will be no more than a happy memory. He shall have departed this world, for another perhaps that we do not know of until, we, too, leave this one. We will adjust, of course, as we always do when we suddenly lose a dear friend without warning. That is how life works, I suppose. But it is still sad, and unfair.

My friend was never given the chance to prove himself fully, or to develop to his maximum potential. He lived a short life, no more years than you could count on the fingers of both hands. He had little say in how he passed his days, or when, or even why, his life had to come to a sudden end. He could not complain, but only passively obey orders, always doing as he was told. I did not

want his short life to pass unremembered. So I offer this as a humble, passing remembrance, a fleeting memorial for a fleeting life, a gesture from a friend to commemorate a casual but constant companionship that lasted only a few years, and ended unjustly, with him gone and the rest of us still here.

He was not, in all truth, a particularly handsome fellow. He sloped a bit, and was not perfectly symmetrical. When it rained, parts of him were always wet. Little puddles, even huge pools, usually formed around his contours.

But I excused it somehow, because he had other attributes that I valued more than physical beauty. He was consistent, to the point of being unforgiving. He did not change colours and allegiances with the seasons, clapping and cheering for whoever happened to be the power of the day. He was brutally stoic. I once asked him what he thought about an international conference to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute. He was silent, motionless. I took that to mean that there were no easy solutions to hard problems. I passed him one day with my car radio blasting out news about the war in the Gulf. He made no gesture. He would have nothing to do with it. I wanted to ask him about Egypt, America, and Lebanon, but I dropped the idea. I knew what he would answer, and did not want to

force him to deal with the frail deeds of ordinary people.

But he was not totally apologetic. When he called to, he made political statements, disguised as subtle gestures that were in keeping with his subdued style. No speeches. No public accolades. No mass demonstrations of support. No waving of flags. Just a tough, self-assured person who knows his job and does it to the best of his ability. When the Palestine National Council met in Amman in November, he rose to the occasion. I had always suspected him of being partial to the Palestinian cause, but I only knew for sure when the entire Palestinian leadership gathered in Amman and held its conference. (Did they know that he had only weeks more amongst us, and wished to make their own gesture of appreciation?) When much of the northward traffic in and out of Amman had to be diverted around the site of the PNC, the traffic burden fell on his shoulders. He handled it beautifully. Not a complaint. Not a plea for help. When a Palestinian state is established one day, I hope he shall be remembered for having played his small part, many years ago, to help bring it about. Maybe, just maybe, the Palestinians will remember him, as Jordanians will, and perhaps even put up a small picture of him in a showcase somewhere in a corner of their future national museum.

As I said, he was not an emotional fellow, and rarely showed his feelings. But I was particularly touched by his moving, valiant, but ultimately futile gestures at survival when he knew that the end was near. Gosh, how he wanted to live. When the workmen and the bulldozers and the steamrollers came one day and started doing their gruesome deed, he knew that his time had come. For a day or two, he did nothing. Then he summoned all the help at his command, and invoked even the powers of the heavens to keep his executioners at bay. The weather suddenly turned freezing cold. But the workers kept working, taking him apart piece by piece, bleeding his body and soul, until first he was just a skeleton of his former self, and then only a silent, listless ghost.

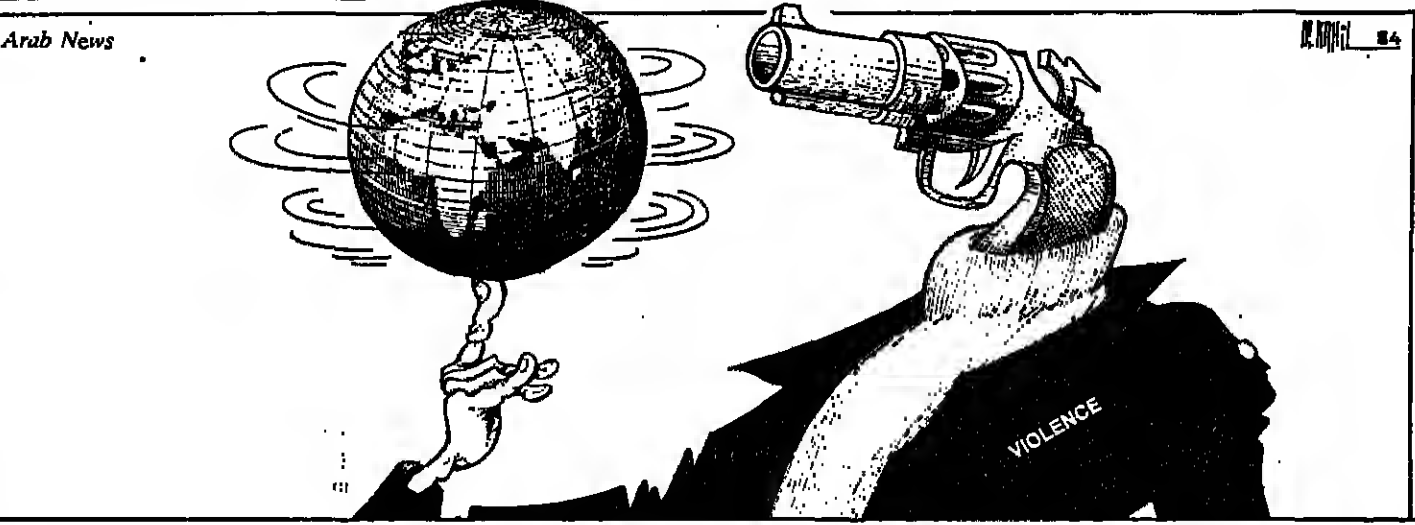
He struggled until the very end, hoping against hope that his fate might change, that his life might be spared, that his communion with the thousands could be extended for a short time longer. He again invoked the heavenly elements. Fierce, freezing rain fell for two days. Strong winds whipped in from the west. He must have thought that the rain and wind would cause the workers and their machines to go away, to give up their awful deed, and to spare this young life.

But it was all in vain. The last breath of life finally went out of him. As his many friends every day passed the spot where he

had always been, they looked around in amazement. They were disoriented, and some of them, like myself, slightly grieved at the sudden disappearance of a friend we had grown up with for an important part of our lives.

We had not even had a chance to make a last gesture of friendship and affection. Had we known that his time with us was soon to end, we could have planted flowers, small bushes, even a tree, to produce the full life that he was never allowed to manifest. We could have cleaned him up, scrubbed him down with water, and spent a last few moments together, remembering the years we had lived through, the things we had seen, the lessons we had learned, and the dreams we had dreamed.

He is just about gone now. I don't know where types like him go to after their days on earth. I like to think there is a special place in paradise for good, consistent, reliable and honest folk of his type. Wherever he has gone, he can be sure that his life, though brief, was useful. He has left behind friends, true, grateful friends who will remember him every year at about this time, when the weather turns cold, the rains start, the days shorten and the mind seeks the reinforcement of life's little episodes to make it through the winter, and to greet another spring.



Six days of terror on hijacked plane

By Trevor Wood

TEHRAN — The hostages freed from the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner who are being treated for injuries in Tehran last week talked about what one of them described as six days of "psychological torture".

Several of them, including the British captain of the aircraft, Captain Harry Clark, and the two Americans who were among the last nine people freed, were in hospital.

The Iranian government which was criticised by some American and Kuwaiti sources for failing to end the siege sooner, said that the four Arab gunmen arrested when the plane was stormed would be put on public trial.

The Iranians dismissed charges of collusion with the hijackers. President Khamenei said that the accusations were baseless.

The accusations against the Iranians stem partly from the fact that the hijackers, whose leader was named by the hostages as Abdul Hassan, are reported to be Lebanese Shi'ite Muslims. The prisoners the hijackers were seeking to free are members of a Lebanese Shi'ite group goaded for a

bomb attack in Kuwait. They claim to be followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini.

President Khamenei said that his government purposely delayed the rescue of the hostages to lure the hijackers, who had killed two of the American passengers already, into a false sense of security.

The story of the hijack was told graphically by the victims. "It was sheer hell. It was terror for six solid days," Captain Clark said. He was roped together with two other hostages just before the attack, and the hijackers were setting down for the night.

"We did not know the rescue was on until a smoke bomb was thrown. I was lucky I was not beaten up like the others... they needed me," Captain Clark said. But he said the hijackers behaved like animals towards other prisoners.

One of the two Americans still on the plane when the Iranians stormed it, Mr. John Costa, a businessman, aged 50, was badly beaten and had cigarette burns on his face and body. Lighted cigarettes were dropped down his shirt front.

He said the hijackers kept trying to force him to make a false confession. "What they wanted

was for me to say I was from the CIA."

Mr. Costa described the hijackers as psychopaths and said that the hostages did not know from one moment to the next what they were going to do.

He added: "If they got angry they beat you up and then they offered you orange juice. It was quite a frightening experience in all, very noisy, and always under the threat of death. I was hoping something would happen, but we didn't know what to think or expect."

The freed hostages said that their first indication that the siege was almost over came when one of the Iranian guards, who was disguised as a doctor, seized a gas grenade being held by the hijacker supervising him as he "treated" one of the sick. There was a struggle, and the grenade went off.

The captain and the American freed by the guards praised the speed and efficiency with which the operation was ended.

Mr. Neil Beeston, the 40-year-old British flight engineer who was one of seven crew members freed only hours before the rescue, said: "There was no let up at all." When he left the plane those still being held were strapped in their chairs with explosives piled all round. "You just can't explain how you feel about something like that."

He was threatened with death several times. "I don't think anyone expected to live. I think everyone had resigned themselves to the fact that they were going to die. They were waiting for the chance to pop somebody off."

"We lost track of time, and there were incidents all the time to keep people under control. There was never any time when there could be an organised attempt to overthrow the hijackers."

He said that the hijackers had faked the death of two Kuwaiti passengers who were beaten on the steps of the plane, and then dragged back inside. Tomato sauce was poured over them and a local photographer brought to take pictures of the "bodies". The two were then kept away from other hostages.

The two passengers who died, Mr. Charles Freud and Mr. William Stanford, were officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development — The Guardian.

at all." When he left the plane those still being held were strapped in their chairs with explosives piled all round. "You just can't explain how you feel about something like that."

He was threatened with death several times. "I don't think anyone expected to live. I think everyone had resigned themselves to the fact that they were going to die. They were waiting for the chance to pop somebody off."

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Allies give the U.S. initial go-ahead for Geneva arms talks

By Sidney Weiland
Reuter

BRUSSELS — European NATO allies have given Washington what amounts to a blank cheque for at least the first round in U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations set for early January.

How long the honeymoon will last may depend on how much — or how little — Secretary of State George Shultz brings back when he meets Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in an attempt to restart the stalled East-West dialogue. NATO diplomats say.

Seasoned Western officials were surprised by the easy ride Mr. Shultz was given by alliance foreign ministers at a NATO conference this week when he set out still vague U.S. ideas for the meeting in Geneva on Jan. 7-8.

The Europeans explained their relaxed approach by saying they appreciated how hard it was to frame a clearcut negotiating strategy when Soviet intentions — after a year's freeze on the arms control front — remain unpredictable.

American diplomats believe European readiness to go along with the initial U.S. bargaining position on trust stems from a final acceptance that President Reagan means serious business on arms control during his second term in office.

"Even the most dubious Europeans have abandoned their image of Reagan as a cowboy," a senior NATO official said.

Another reason cited for European calm is that governments no longer feel under pressure from anti-nuclear protesters.

The other 15 foreign ministers at the Brussels conference agreed Friday that Mr. Shultz would go to Geneva with their blessing and try to get the best deal possible out of Mr. Gromyko.

In turn, Mr. Shultz promised them the Reagan administration would keep them informed at every stage, officials said.

In early 1981, as Mr. Reagan settled into his first term, the Europeans were impatient to get talks started on European-based medium-range nuclear missiles. After two years of abortive negotiations and a Soviet walkout, they are more phlegmatic.

"Nobody is breathing down American necks," a British official said. "Nobody is running down the course."

Even the West Germans, at the head of a nervous European pack four years ago, seem content after a hurried trip to Washington by Chancellor Helmut Kohl. In Brussels, they pressed mainly for the fullest consultations once talks get started.

Italians, French, Dutch and others offered Mr. Shultz friendly advice but made no demands and no mention of a timetable. "We were counselled to show patience, expect things to go too fast," Mr. Shultz said.

"The whole basis of managing East-West relations requires an effort which must be patient, sustained and ceaseless," British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe declared.

Everybody agreed with the assessment of NATO Secretary General Lord Carrington that "it's going to take a long time."

The most overworked words of the two-day session were "long haul" as applied to the uncharted perils of Geneva, where talks on both medium-range and strategic weapons broke down last winter after new U.S. missiles were deployed in Western Europe.

Other NATO ministers seemed to accept as normal that the U.S. administration still had no firm position for Geneva, and U.S. arms experts told them the inter-agency debate in Washington would probably continue up to the January deadline.

This is because there has been almost no contact between the superpowers on arms control issues for many months.

The Geneva session is expected to focus on a broad field — what Mr. Reagan has called an "umbrella" approach — embracing space weapons, Moscow's chief concern, as well as mid-range, inter-continental and anti-satellite missiles.

Most specialists believe the meeting will be inconclusive or will set only broad guidelines, leaving it to other officials to meet soon afterwards to decide how to proceed, with a second Shultz-Gromyko session to follow later.

U.S. officials encouraged NATO leaders to assume that on the American side the second-echelon effort would be led by Paul Nitze, until last year chief U.S. envoy in the medium-range talks. Washington assumes Mr. Gromyko will name a comparable figure.

Mr. Nitze's appointment as Mr. Shultz's special adviser for the talks was warmly welcomed in Europe, where the veteran arms negotiator is highly regarded. The Europeans are also glad that Mr. Shultz seems to be retaining control in planning tactics.

U.S. officials said the outcome at Geneva would depend on Soviet long-term conceptions. "Concepts may be more important than the nitty-gritty," one official said.

The meeting would be wrecked if Mr. Gromyko sought to focus only on space weapons, where the United States has a head start, rather than on already based medium-range missiles which Mr. Shultz assured NATO "will be very much part of the discussions."

Mr. Shultz and other ministers accepted the meeting would be mainly "talks about talks", but officials differed about how much hard business would be conducted.

Alliance analysts said there was a broad consensus against an arms agreement "at any price." A NATO communiqué set Geneva sights on "equitable, verifiable and balanced agreements in which all concerned can have confidence."

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England claims 2nd test against India

NEW DELHI (R) — England pulled off an eight wickets victory over India with 8.2 overs to spare on a dramatic fifth and final day of the second cricket test here Monday.

England, whose success put them level 1-1 in the five-match series and ended a sequence of 13 tests without a win, upset the odds through fine bowling by left arm spinner Phil Edmonds and off spinner Pat Pocock.

The pair shared eight wickets as India, 111 behind on first innings, collapsed from 207 for four to 235 all out in the second session.

England needed 125 in 58 minutes and 20 mandatory overs and swept home at 127 for two, swiftly avenging their eight-wicket defeat in the first test in Bombay.

India, 128 for two overnight, seemed to have put the game on course for a draw at lunch when they were 204 for four — 93 ahead.

But Edmonds, who captured four for 60, and Pocock, with four for 93, stunningly tilted the balance by skittling the rest of the

innings, the last six wickets tumbling for 28.

England's hopes rose and then fell in the morning session when captain Sunil Gavaskar and Mohinder Amarnath resumed the third wicket stand which produced 113 Sunday to lift India from 15 for two.

Edmonds struck the first blow when he bowled Amarnath for 64 with only eight added, while Pocock bowled Gavaskar for 65 to leave India in trouble at 172 for four.

But Sandeep Patil and Ravi Shastri saw their side safely to lunch and gave no inkling of the collapse to follow.

The last six wickets fell in 90 minutes, with Edmonds earning his wickets with unerring accuracy and Pocock enticing the batsmen into mistakes.

Olympics venue to remain, IOC director says

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (R) — There is no question of changing the venue of the 1988 Olympics from the South Korean capital of Seoul, International Olympic Committee (IOC) Director Monique Berlioux said Monday.

She was responding to questions after reports that North Korea had urgently requested the IOC to cancel the choice of Seoul because it said South Korea was an unstable area under constant threat of war because of the presence of armed forces and 40,000 U.S. troops.

Official Pyongyang radio said Sunday that North Korea's Olympic Committee chairman had demanded the change in a letter to IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. Berlioux said that as yet no such letter had arrived at IOC headquarters.

"We have repeatedly said that the 1988 Olympics will take place in Seoul. There is no question of changing the site," Berlioux told Reuters Monday.

Pyongyang radio said it opposed holding the games in the South and also did not want them in the North. But it said North Korea would make every effort to join with South Korea in putting together a single Korean team for the 1988 games.

Norway beats Egypt in friendly soccer match

CAIRO (R) — Norway, fielding their top national side, beat Egypt 1-0 in a friendly soccer match here Monday.

Norwegian midfielder Vidar Davidson scored the only goal when he outjumped Egyptian defenders to head home inside the right post past goalkeeper Ahmed Shoubir.

Both sides played an imaginative first-half, though Norway showed better control and fast one-touch football.

Egypt's mostly young, untested players dominated the second half but failed to capitalise on excellent scoring chances.

Heroics by goalkeeper Erik Thorstvedt and timely interceptions by Per Edmund Mordt and Terje Kojedal in defence also helped deny the Egyptians an equaliser.

The home side looked like scoring in the 18th minute when winger Mohammed Ramadan, in his first international, intercepted a pass from 30-year-old Age Hardeide to Thorstvedt.

Ramadan's powerful right-footed drive was on target, but the ball coded up in the safe hands of Thorstvedt.

Alaa Nabil, whose fast dribbling and perfectly weighted crosses from the right were a constant menace to the visitors, took a cross swung over by teammate Taher Abu Zeid in the 65th minute. But once again, Thorstvedt denied the goal with a diving save at his feet.

Shoubir pulled off an identical save when he dived to deny striker Jan Berg five minutes later in a goalmouth melee.

The two teams meet again on Thursday in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia.

UEFA to discuss Celtic, Rapid match disturbances

BERNE (R) — The European Football Association (UEFA) is planning to meet on January 17 to discuss the disturbances during last week's replayed European Cup Winners' Cup match between Scotland's Celtic and Rapid Vienna of Austria, a spokesman for the authority said Monday.

UEFA ordered the second round second leg tie, which Celtic originally won 3-0 on November 7 to reach the quarter-finals 4-3 on aggregate, to be replayed 160 kms from Glasgow after Rapid claimed a bottle thrown from the crowd had hit one of their players.

Pele of the Desert wins praise

SINGAPORE (R) — Newly-crowned Asian soccer champions Saudi Arabia Monday left for home after winning praise all round for their 2-0 victory over China in the Asian Cup final Sunday.

The players returned \$9,000 a man better off for winning the championship.

The local press, which had predicted a win for China, named captain Majed Mohammed, scorer of the decisive second goal, as the 'Man of the Match.'

The English-language Straits Times carried a front page picture of 25-year-old Majed hoisting the cup.

Majed, the 'Pele of the Desert,' was carried off on a stretcher when he tore a hamstring muscle minutes after beating three defenders and outwitting the Chinese goalkeeper to score one of the most spectacular goals in the 14-day tournament.

"There was so much class in Majed's goal that when he was stretched off... China still could not recover from their broken spirits," the Straits Times said.

"China were never a match for the tactically superior Saudi Arabia. They ran out of ideas after the Saudis got their second goal," said the Singapore Monitor.

China, who had the benefit of a partisan 30,000 crowd, also credited the Saudi Arabians for their performance. "They were a better team. There is no doubt about that," coach Zheng Xue Lin told reporters.

China, however, did not go home empty handed. In Sunday night's award ceremony, they won the 'most sporting team' title and Jia Xiquan was voted the 'best player' and shared the 'top scorer' title with two others for scoring three goals.

But his efforts in Sunday night's final were thwarted by Saudi Arabia goalkeeper Abdullah Al Dayyeh, who earned the 'best goalkeeper' award. Al Dayyeh's brilliant efforts helped his team sweep past holders Kuwait and triple cup winners Iran on their road to the final.

The Iran team failed to turn up for the award ceremony after complaining that they should have won the 'fair play' trophy instead of China.

W. Germany maintains unbeaten record

VALLETTA (R) — West Germany scraped through 3-2 against Malta's brave part-timers Sunday to maintain their unbeaten record in the World Cup European qualifying Group Two.

The mighty Germans went home with the points to put them in second place in the group, behind Sweden on goal average, but the Mediterranean islanders made them fight all the way with a lion-hearted display.

The Maltese shocked the visitors and sent their fans into rapturous roars after 11 minutes when Carmel Busitt took a pass from Michael Woods, turned and shot past a surprised Toni Schumacher in the German goal.

The goal galvanised the Germans, who launched wave after wave of attack and came close on several occasions only to be denied by home keeper Ray Mifsud.

But it was a mistake by Mifsud that allowed the visitors to equalise three minutes before the interval. Brebme crossed from the right, Foerster shot and Mifsud failed to hold the ball and watched it end up in the net.

West German team manager and former World Cup star Franz Beckenbauer, clearly relieved by the goal, sent his men out on the attack again immediately after the break. Their efforts paid off after 69 minutes when Matthaeus started after a fine move involving Rummenigge and Voeller.

The goal appeared to sink the home side's morale and the Germans continued to push forward in the quest for a more respectable goal tally against the part-timers.

After 84 minutes, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, described by Beckenbauer last week as the 'best player in the world at the moment', eluded Azzopardi and crossed for Uwe Rahn to score West Germany's third.

But, roared on by 30,000 fans, the first time the four-year-old Ta' Qali stadium had been filled to capacity, the Maltese fought back and sent the stadium into an explosion of delight when Ray Xueh smacked a shot past Schumacher from the edge of the box with two minutes remaining.

The narrow win meant Sweden stayed top of the group, with the same points tally and goal difference as the West Germans but having scored more goals. But the Swedes have played four games to the Germans' two.

Portugal are third, also on four points, Czechoslovakia fourth with two points and Malta last with no points from three games.

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TIME

BRITAIN: A Nation Divided
Britain's clash of ideas (report on the miners' strike)
DEATH UNDER THE SUN (Rebellion in New Caledonia)
THE SPLIT AMONG THE GREENS (Turbulence in German politics)
ROOTING OUT THE MAFIA (Police raid nets 97 suspects)

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(Colour)
(Arabic)
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Cinema RAINBOW

Tel: 25155

AGAINST ALL ODDS

(Colour)
3:30 6:00 8:30 10:30 p.m.

Cinema ZAHARAN

Tel: 23171

WHITE COLOUR

(In colour)
Performances: 12-3 - 5:30-8

Cinema OPERA

IDOL MAKER

(Colour)

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(In colour)
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U.S. carmakers' profits may rise

DETROIT (R) — U.S. carmakers, riding high after a year of record profits, are likely to turn in another gleaming performance in 1985 despite signs that the high-speed U.S. economy is slowing down, analysts say.

Analysts are forecasting that 1985 car sales will roughly match this year's level of about 10.5 million. Truck sales are generally seen overtaking 1984's estimated output of about 4.1 million.

As a result the major American automakers are expected to be flush with bumper profits again, although the industry as a whole is unlikely to repeat 1984's projected earnings of about \$10 billion.

Much of this reflects the fact that Chrysler — the third largest car and truck manufacturer in the U.S. — will probably pay federal taxes next year after having exhausted its tax credits for past losses and investments. It was not required to pay federal taxes this year.

Car analysts say the industry is likely to enjoy a healthy year in 1985 even though Detroit is worried that the recent rising trend in vehicle sales may be flattening out.

Underpinning the companies' rosier financial performance are the major steps they have taken to slash costs since the last recession.

The industry suffered combined losses of \$6.3 billion in 1980 and 1981.

Despite high output of cars over the past two years, hourly employment in the U.S. auto industry has slumped well below its 1978 peak.



At a large Detroit automobile plant, robot welders play an important role in production of Chrysler cars.

Analysts foresee new work force reductions as the companies work to boost productivity through large investments in automation and other modern manufacturing techniques.

The United Auto Workers union made major concessions estimated at more than \$3 billion in 1982 and signed new contracts with General Motors and Ford this year.

The new labor agreements gave a higher priority to job security than increased wages and are

thus regarded as moderate when compared with settlements of the past two decades.

Adding further gloss to the industry's fortunes, buyers who were stung by soaring oil prices into driving less thirsty cars have been shifting back to larger vehicles and to cars dressed up with an expensive array of optional extras.

"Next year, even with a slightly smaller volume, the U.S. companies would not see their profit pictures destroyed," said Mr. Thomas O'Grady, auto analyst for

Chase Econometrics, an economic forecasting firm.

Imports, mostly from Japan, are expected to account for about one in every four cars sold in the U.S. next year.

Since Japanese imports are limited to 1.85 million units under a "voluntary restraint agreement" during the 12 months ending next March, a lifting or loosening of quotas expected early next year should allow the imports to capture a larger share of the market, analysts said.

Israel faces grave monetary crisis

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's foreign currency reserves will run out by the middle of next year unless the United States provides a massive increase in economic aid, finance ministry officials said Monday.

They were speaking after a high-level economic team left for Washington to begin talks on Israel's 1986 aid allocation.

Government economic sources said they intended to ask Washington for \$4 billion in aid in 1986, compared with the \$2.5 billion Israel is getting next year.

The officials, who asked not be named, said that if Washington granted less than \$3.5 billion Israel would face a grave monetary

crisis by the middle of next year. Israel's foreign currency reserves now stand at \$2.8 billion after the United States last month advanced payment of \$1.2 billion in 1985 aid.

The reserves are falling by \$300-\$400 million a month.

The decline has continued despite a sharp improvement in the balance of trade, which saved the country \$800 million this year.

"The reserves fell sharply this

year because of a big increase in short-term debt repayments which will continue next year," said Bank of Israel economist Mr. Geoffrey Fisher.

Fifteen per cent of Israel's external debt, which at \$2.4 billion is the world's highest per capita, consists of short-term loans that must be repaid within a year.

The finance ministry officials said these debt repayments would cause a substantial drain on reserves in the next few months and lead to renewed doubts about Israel's creditworthiness in the international financial community.

If the United States refused to increase aid, it would become increasingly difficult and eventually

impossible to secure credit and the reserves would run out, they said. U.S. officials recently indicated reluctance to increase aid.

Last week, Secretary of State Mr. George Shultz was reported to have told Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir he was disappointed by Israel's failure to adopt tough austerity measures.

Since coming to power in September the multi-party coalition has imposed a partial wage-and-price freeze and banned the import of luxury goods.

Economists have called for big government spending cuts to reduce inflation, now about 800 per cent a year.

Gold price falls below \$320 an ounce

ZURICH (R) — Gold fell below \$320 an ounce Monday, its lowest level in almost 2½ years, and traders said it could fall even further because of an almost total lack of investor interest.

After falling in New York on Friday and in the Far East Monday, gold opened in Zurich at \$317 an ounce, almost \$6 below last week's finish.

It was the lowest quote for gold since July 8, 1982.

Bullion dealers said the metal was clearly heading towards \$300 and some were even more pessimistic.

"There is absolutely no reason to be optimistic," said one chief gold trader. "There are just no buyers around. The next resistance point for gold is between \$310 and \$313 and then it is \$290. After that it could go as low as \$250," he added.

The dealers could cite no new reasons for gold's latest decline.

The metal has been under pressure from the surging dollar for most of 1984, but the U.S. currency was mixed against other currencies in Europe Monday morning.

"The market is just dull.

No-one wants gold," one trader said.

Gold, once viewed as the best haven against economic uncertainty, rose above \$800 an ounce in 1980, but has since lost favour as Western inflation rates have faltered.

The dollar rose to 5.0932 marks on European foreign exchange markets from 3.0865 at Friday's close, but slipped to 9.4875 French francs from 9.5050 and to 2.5515 Swiss francs from 2.5545, while sterling eased to \$1.1925 from \$1.1955.

Foreign exchange dealers re-

ported that business was very quiet with many traders already winding up operations ahead of Christmas.

Istanbul begins gold trading

Meanwhile, Turkey Monday began gold bullion trading for the first time in a bid to stop speculation and a thriving unauthorised market.

The central bank's Istanbul foreign exchange branch set a buying price of 4,460 liras per gramme and selling price of 4,514 liras, close to Monday's London price of around \$316 per troy ounce.

Arab bankers lack versatility, expertise

LONDON — Arab banks, which stormed to the top of the European market by wielding their hefty petrodollar assets in the late 1970s, now find that the restructuring of the market that followed the world debt crisis has left them several paces behind their competitors.

The drift away from traditional syndicated lending to new financial instruments in the Euro-markets underscores the criticism other banks have of the Arab leaders — their lack of versatility and market expertise.

Trouble in the Gulf has also forced the major Arab banks to scale down their activities.

The war between Iran and Iraq, the collapse of the Souk Al Manakh stock exchange — now nicknamed the "manusoleum" — and the fall of the Gaddafi and Al Shobokshi financial empires in the Gulf, and the slump in financing for regional development projects have all curtailed the banks' aggressiveness in the Euro-markets.

So, too, has the widening spread between the dollar and the Kuwaiti dinar caused by these crises.

As a result, the Kuwaiti dinar no longer is one of the more sought-after currencies of the international bond market.

The challenge facing the Arab banks cannot be shrugged off by their huge asset base. One London-based Arab banker said that "nowadays capital isn't as important on the market as placement power and diversity."

The amount of syndicated lending in the Euro-markets has shrunk from \$153 billion in 1981 to \$74 billion last year, and these tight market conditions have ruled out many of the smaller Arab banks.

The big ones, like Arab Banking Corp. (ABC) — owned by Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Libya — have branched into new markets in Eastern Europe, where for political reasons Arab banks had always feared to tread.

This year, ABC lead managed three credits to Hungary, worth a total of \$570 million. It is also putting together a group of lead managers for a floating-rate certificate of deposit for the Moscow Narodny Bank. The amount is still undisclosed.

ABC also managed to convince the Bank of China, despite Peking's hostilities with Moscow, to come in as a lead manager.

ABC, however, has been slightly less adventurous than its rival, Gulf International Bank (GIB), in jumping on the Euro-note bandwagon. The excitement about Euro-notes seems to stem from bankers' aversion to long-term sovereign loans after so many Latin American countries refused to make interest payments.

These Euro-notes allow the banks to act as underwriters who sell off the notes that the client issues with the banks on the guarantee short-term money market. The banks do not receive interest.

as with a straight loan, but profit instead by taking fees and selling their client's notes.

ABC, which has \$4.24 billion of its \$10.1-billion assets out in loans, claims that the Euro-note business is too "marginal." Profits are not as high as collecting interest on a syndicated loan, but then the risk is smaller.

GIB, however, ranks to the top 22 of Euromoney's tally of banks dabbling in revolving underwriting facilities (RUF). GIB, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait and the National Bank of Kuwait also made the list with at least four underwriting deals to their credit in recent months.

Despite its criticism over the paper-thin margins of the Euro-note, ABC could not stay out of a recent \$500-million RUF for Spain. The facility was not a success, as ABC and other lead managers were disappointed by the market's lukewarm response.

Renfe, the Spanish state railway company, which issued the RUF, had hoped to raise as much as \$800 million.

ABC was not alone among Arab banks in venturing into Eastern Europe. Kuwait, traditionally an American ally, has been trying to take a more neutral stance by courting the Kremlin too.

Among themselves, Arab bankers argue over how adroit their institutions will be at grappling with new-fangled financial instruments. Some say they have the necessary professional know-how.

built up over a decade on the Euro-markets.

But others reply that the depth of talent is simply not there to diversify into more sophisticated products.

The international operations of most Arab banks are still centered in the Middle East, and lending officers in London often complain that the lengthy chain of command impedes them from making the swift decisions needed to stay abreast of the market.

One outspoken Arab banker said: "It is not just a question of having the capital to play around; you should also know how the game is played. It takes many years of experience to gain that expertise. The market is changing rapidly, and it won't wait for the Arab bankers to catch up."

The Gulf states recently announced plans to set up a bankers' training institute. "This ought to help," one U.S. banker said.

The trend has been for Arab banks to manage their portfolios cautiously. They have cut down on sovereign lending outside the Middle East. ABC, for one, has widely managed to shed its Latin American loans from 35 per cent of its total assets in 1981 to 16.5 per cent last year. Instead, most banks are opting for loans to top corporations, project finance in the Arab World, Europe and the Far East, and raising funds for clients through bonds and floating-rate notes — International Herald Tribune.

LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON (R) — Equities closed below best levels after a moderately active session and at 1530 GMT the FTSE 100 index was up 8.8 at 1,213.6 having touched a record 1,217.6.

The higher trend was in response to year end institutional demand. Dealers said once this had been completed prices drifted lower with ICI finishing 20p up at 732 after 742.

Hambro Life returned from suspension after agreed bid terms from BAT Industries for a net rise of 40p at 538. BAT ended 27p higher at 340. Other insurance firms in response to the BAT bid but closed off highs in line with the general trend. North Americans were mixed and gold shares declined.

Government bonds opened firmer but drifted for want of interest to show falls ranging to about six points, dealers said. The government broker issued to the Bank of England three tranches of existing stock valued at £500 million after which medium term issues eased slightly.

Banks showed mixed movements with Barclays up 5p at 549 and Midland down 2p at 367 while oils were lower with B.P. down 5p at 480. British Telecom rose 1½ to 102½.

The F.T. 30 index at 1500 GMT was up 4.7 points at 940.1 having touched a new high of 943.9.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One sterling	1.1910/20	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.3201/04	Canadian dollars
	3.0955/75	West German marks
	3.4930/50	Dutch guilders
	2.5505/25	Swiss francs
	62.17/21	Belgian francs
	9.4900/75	French francs
	1905.5/6.5	Italian lire
	247.65/80	Japanese yen
	8.8400/8500	Swedish crowns
	8.9450/9550	Norwegian crowns
	11.0700/0800	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	316.10/316.60	U.S. dollars

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, DEC. 18, 1984

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The main focus of today should be on investigating and ferreting out information you can use to improve your present position as well as gain understanding of what is mysterious to you.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Face squarely any obligations you have and get them handled effectively. Don't argue with one who wants to sell you something.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) An associate who is narrow-minded can try to spoil a plan you have but will become more reasonable later on.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) A fellow worker may want own way today but use reason and show that cooperation is best. Find happiness at home.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) You want to have a good time but try not to spend too much money or get bored at something new.

LEO (July 22 to Aug. 21) If you take up moot topics at home you can raise the tension there considerably, so keep silent and all is well.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Important you use much care in motion of all kinds since recklessness could get you into big trouble. Avoid hurt feelings.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Trying to assist another could bring much trouble to you since that person would not be appreciative.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Make sure to use right methods in business today otherwise you could get into big trouble. Be happy at home.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Refrain from criticizing a friend for something you do not approve of or you could get into real trouble.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Avoid a purposeful friend who could easily deter your own progress in life. Steer clear of a group where arguments can occur.

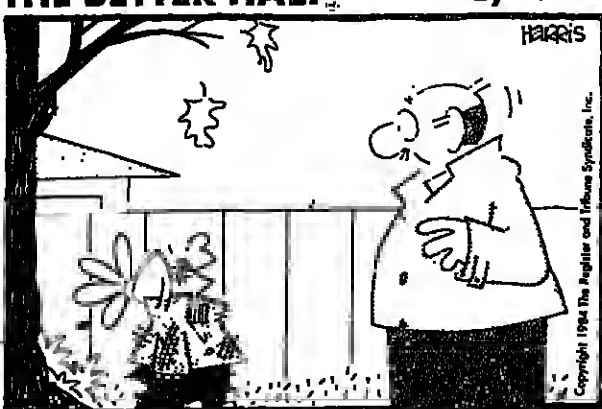
AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Be more careful in the outside world and don't jeopardize your reputation in any way. Not a good day to ask a favor.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) You had better study that new plan more carefully before you put it in motion so that you do not meet with trouble at this time.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY... be or she would do well at investigative work since there is the ability to ferret out the truth of any situation, but should be taught not to make critical statements that could alienate others and be destructive to the purpose in mind, and also to be more broad-minded and cooperative.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris

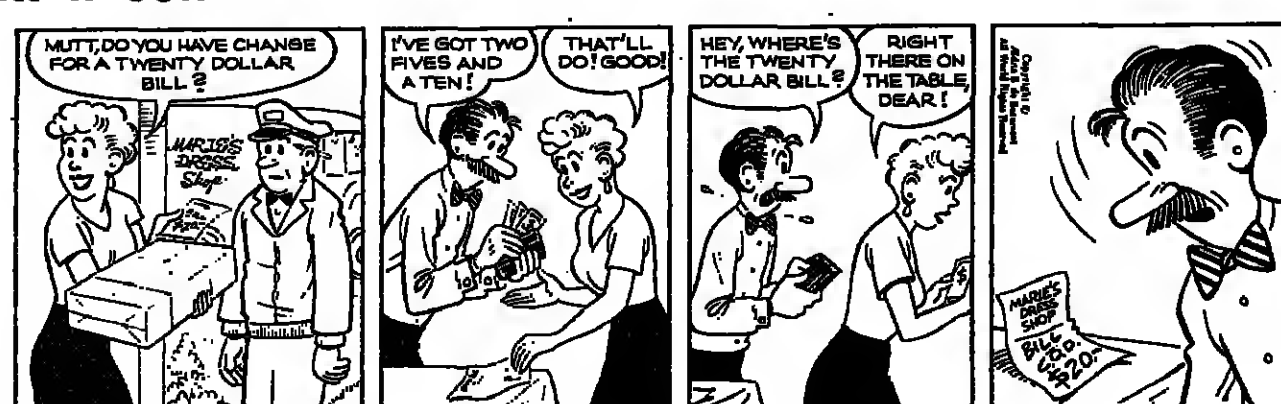


"I've been playing with those weird Frisbees you got with your computer!"

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff

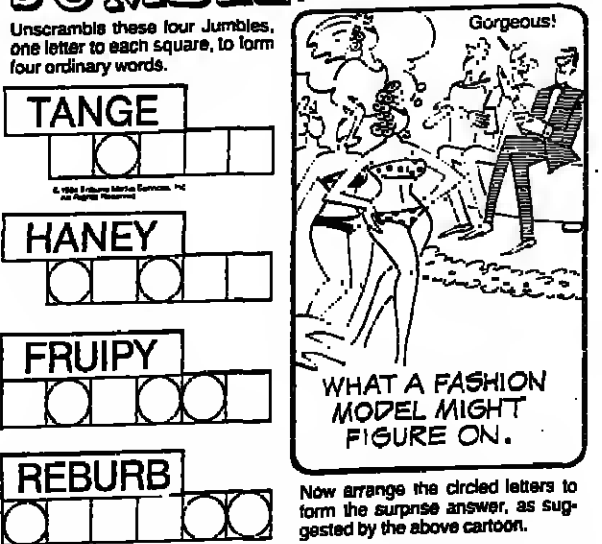


Andy Capp



JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henry Arnold and Bob Lee

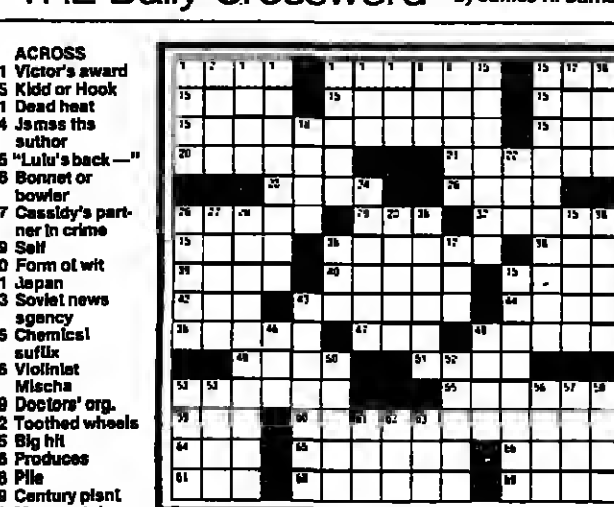


Print answer here: (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CRUSH WAKEN BISHOP NOTIFY Answer: He's the most important man in the ring because he's the only one WHO COUNTS

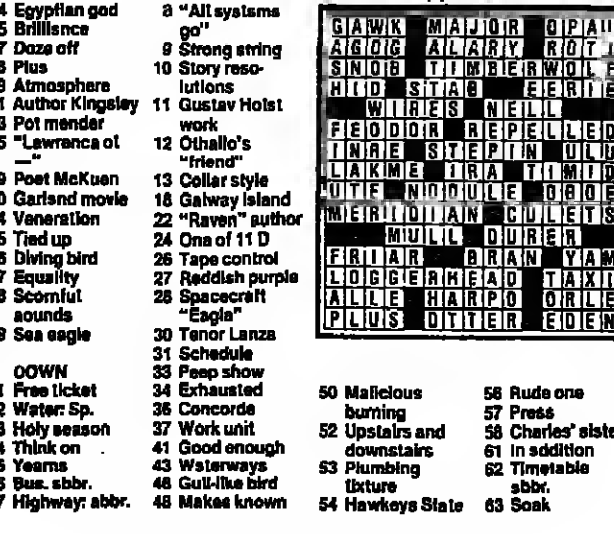
THE Daily Crossword

by James R. Burns



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



U.S. reluctant to negotiate away Star Wars programme

WASHINGTON (R) — President Reagan still has not decided how far the United States will go, during U.S.-Soviet talks in Geneva next month, on Moscow's call for negotiations to ban space weapons, according to U.S. officials.

British sources said Soviet politburo member Mikhail Gorbachev discussed Moscow's concern over space weapons during his meeting Sunday with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The major U.S. goal in Geneva will be to renew U.S.-Soviet negotiations, suspended by Moscow last year, on reducing long-range strategic missiles and limiting medium-range missiles in Europe. A U.S. negotiator, Edward Rowley, said publicly last week that many U.S. officials have voiced privately — that he hoped the Geneva talks would lead to a renewal of full negotiations on the missiles but only to discussions on space weapons.

The Soviet government daily Izvestia said last week that Mr. Reagan's Star Wars programme displayed an attitude that "whoever controls space controls the world."

Secretary of State George Shultz said in Brussels last week the decision had not been made and suggested Washington was reluctant to negotiate away Mr. Reagan's "Star Wars" space defence research programme.

Another official told reporters the U.S. position on space weapons was one of the toughest decisions facing Mr. Reagan before the Jan. 7-8 Geneva meeting between Mr. Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to discuss renewing U.S.-Soviet arms talks.

But the White House said at the weekend the decision-making process was moving well and that Mr. Shultz would get his instructions from Mr. Reagan on U.S. positions before he leaves for Geneva.

Moscow's chief objective in Geneva is to win new negotiations on prohibiting the militarisation of space.

Star Wars is the popular name for Mr. Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) research programme on an array of laser and other space weapons that would be able to shoot down Soviet nuclear missiles as soon as they were fired.

Mr. Shultz stressed after a meeting with NATO allies in Brussels last week that Star Wars was only at the research stage. "I don't know quite how you bargain about a research programme," he said. "But you can certainly talk about it."

He added: "At any rate just how the discussions and negotiations about space-related matters will be handled is one of the things that we're discussing in detail with the president."

Another U.S. official, who did not want to be named, said Mr. Shultz cautioned NATO foreign ministers privately that the U.S. position on space weapons required tough decisions.

He said Mr. Shultz and Mr. Gromyko generally would talk only about new negotiations. But he said that meant Mr. Reagan must decide whether to go beyond talks to negotiations on space

weapons and if so what he was willing to negotiate.

President Reagan told Congress last April it was too soon to negotiate a treaty banning anti-satellite weapons because Moscow was too far ahead and no foolproof way had been found to detect cheating on such a ban.

Mr. Shultz suggested in Brussels, however, that the United States might be willing to go part of the way and negotiate a moratorium on testing anti-satellite weapons.

Mr. Reagan has promoted Star Wars as a way to end the threat of nuclear war by making it impossible for the Soviet Union to launch an effective strike against the United States.

But Moscow says Star Wars would militarise space because the Soviet Union would be compelled to develop enough nuclear missiles to overwhelm any U.S. defence.

One compromise Mr. Reagan is considering, according to a published report, is a U.S. pledge to keep Star Wars in the research stage for at least three years, offering hope that progress could be made toward a space weapons ban by then.



HELPING HAND — British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe (right) helps visiting Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko (left) with his coat when they met for talks at Hampton Court Monday. The Soviet leader is in Britain on a seven-day visit (see story page 1) AP Wirephoto

Mitterrand defends foreign policy

PARIS (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand, under attack at home over failure to secure a Libyan military withdrawal from Chad, defended his foreign policy, saying it could only be judged in the long term.

Mr. Mitterrand said Sunday night in a television interview he did not plan to send French troops to northern Chad, where France says an estimated 3,000 Libyan troops remain despite a pull-out agreement signed last September between Paris and Tripoli.

He said such an operation would be totally useless. "This area is nothing but a desert with a few oases. There is no point in the French army going there," Mr. Mitterrand declared.

The president blamed previous governments for tension in France's South Pacific territory of New Caledonia where militant Melanesians, known as Kanaks, are demanding independence. French settlers who are in a majority there oppose ending ties with Paris.

Mr. Mitterrand said a 1956 decision to grant the territory limited autonomy had never been implemented, but he refused to commit himself about the future of

New Caledonia.

Asked whether the territory would be independent from France soon, he replied: "It may be, but this is not yet the case."

Mr. Mitterrand said several countries looked towards New Caledonia with greed, and he attacked the Australian government over what he called its surprising attitude.

He did not elaborate. But Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden has been critical of French policy there. He said last month that Canberra strongly supported self-determination and that New Caledonia represented one of the last vestiges of colonialism in the Pacific.

This remark in particular angered the French government.

Mr. Mitterrand said Sunday: "There is no longer any indigenous population in Australia because it has been killed. This is not the way France wants to solve the problem in New Caledonia."

The French leader defended a meeting he had in Crete last month with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

He said he knew at the time that Libyan soldiers were still in northern Chad but he had firmly told

Col. Qadhafi that relations between France and Libya could not return to normal until the Libyan withdrawal had been completed.

The Libyan leader maintains that his troops have left Chad. Mr. Mitterrand said he had made arrangements to protect the French population in southern Chad, where Chadian government forces are fighting rebels said by Chadian President Hissene Habre to be backed by Libya.

Dealing with a visit he paid Syria earlier this month and recent talks he had in Paris with King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Mr. Mitterrand said France could play a useful part in helping find a solution in the Middle East.

He declined to elaborate but said Mr. Peres was more open than his predecessors on the Palestinian question.

Mr. Mitterrand ruled out a meeting with Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in the near future and said the PLO had not made any gesture towards Israel recently.

"There has been no step forward from Arafat," he said.

Greece redeploys forces to face Turkey

ATHENS (R) — Greece said Monday it plans changes in the deployment of its armed forces to reflect the Socialist government's belief that the country is threatened by fellow NATO member Turkey and not by the Warsaw Pact.

Government spokesman Sotiris Kostopoulos confirmed a report in the daily Eleftherotipia that "a rearrangement of the armed forces is being worked out by the defence minister in the belief that danger does not come from the north but from the east — Turkey."

Neither Mr. Kostopoulos nor Eleftherotipia gave any details of the changes. Mr. Kostopoulos said Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, who is also defence minister, would present them to the inner cabinet after the Christmas holidays.

Greece's Socialist government,

which is committed to the long-term goal of withdrawal from NATO, has repeatedly said it perceives no threat from its Communist neighbours to the north.

Eleftherotipia said Mr. Papandreu announced his intention of making defence changes in a part of a speech to party officials on Saturday which was not included in the 50-page text distributed to journalists.

The daily quoted Mr. Papandreu as saying that if next month's meeting between Cyprus President Spyros Kyprianou and Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denkash brought an end to the island's partition between ethnic Greeks and Turks, the focus of Greek-Turkish disputes could shift to the Aegean Sea.

Greece and Turkey are at odds in the Aegean over air, sea, and seabed rights.

"If a solution to the Cyprus dis-

pute is found, that does not mean there will also be a normalisation of Greek-Turkish relations. One cannot rule out a fresh worsening," the daily quoted Mr. Papandreu as saying.

The government announced last week it would not take part in any NATO exercises until the settlement of a dispute with Turkey and NATO command over Greek Armed Forces on Lemnos Island, which Turkey wants demilitarised. NATO strategy envisages specific tasks for the Greek Armed Forces in resisting a Warsaw Pact advance.

According to an official U.S. document, Washington expects Greece in the event of war to "block any pact thrust southward toward the Mediterranean ... and join with Turkey in resisting any Soviet effort to seize control of the Dardanelles (Straits)."

Genscher heads for Prague today

BONN (R) — West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher begins a two-day visit to Prague after a series of setbacks for Bonn's efforts to revive East-West dialogue.

He will stress the contribution European nations can make to the new phase in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States marked by next month's exploratory arms control talks between their foreign ministers in Geneva. West German diplomatic sources said.

Mr. Genscher called off a planned visit to Poland last month at the last minute after the Polish authorities created what Bonn described as unacceptable obstacles.

In September East German head of state Erich Honecker and Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov cancelled scheduled visits to West Germany. Both were believed to be acting under pressure from Moscow which did not wish to see Bonn play a pioneering role in any improvement in East-West relations.

Mr. Genscher's visit takes place against the background of some 470 East Germans camping out in West Germany's Prague embassy for up to three months in an effort to get to the West. About 40 of them began a hunger strike last week.

The sources said the East Germans' presence in the embassy would not hamper Mr. Genscher's visit as Czechoslovakia regarded the problem as a bilateral issue between East and West Germany.

Bonn Foreign Ministry officials declined to say whether Mr. Genscher would try to talk to the East Germans at the embassy.

Western diplomatic sources said this would depend on whether the East German government would personally persuade them to give up their campaign and go home.

Senior West German officials have already advised them to return home and accept an East German promise they would not be punished and would be allowed to apply for exit visas — but with no guarantee these would be issued.

But Mr. Manoh said he and lawyer Doan Mong Thu were appointed to the job and would do the best they could.

During the trial in what used to be the National Assembly hall of the U.S.-backed Saigon government people queued outside to see Chinese weapons and ammunition the accused were said to have brought when they infiltrated into Vietnam.

U.S. denies charges

The U.S. embassy in Bangkok denied Monday charges by Hanoi that American diplomats in Thailand took part in or knew of plans to overthrow Vietnam's government.

"Allegations that the U.S. government supports any anti-Vietnamese government activities in Vietnam are totally baseless," embassy spokesman Larry Thomas said.

"No plans to overthrow Hanoi's government such as those reportedly described in last week's trial have ever been communicated to us," Mr. Thomas said.

Trial of Vietnamese plotters ends

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (R) — The supreme court will Tuesday decide the fate of 21 dissidents accused of plotting to overthrow the Vietnamese government with the help of China, Thailand and the United States.

Summing up at the end of their trial Monday, chief prosecutor Tran Le said the dissidents, accused of treason and espionage, were "guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt."

Mr. Tran said evidence was conclusive that the accused, many of them military men who served in the former South Vietnamese army, plotted to overthrow the government with the support of China and Thailand and the connivance of the United States.

He said the full force of the law should be brought to bear against the 21, many of whom admitted their guilt and asked for leniency at the end of the trial.

Under Vietnamese law the maximum penalty for treason and espionage is death by firing squad and one of the defendants asked to be executed.

Court-appointed defence lawyer Trieu Quoc Manh said: "They violated the law and nobody can defend them because they are traitors."

But Mr. Manh said he and lawyer Doan Mong Thu were appointed to the job and would do the best they could.

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"No plans to overthrow Hanoi's government such as those reportedly described in last week's trial have ever been communicated to us," Mr. Thomas said.

Peking prepares to sign Hong Kong agreement

PEKING (AP) — The British governor of Hong Kong, Sir Edward Youde, arrived Monday to prepare for the signing of the joint declaration that will transfer the colony to China in 1997.

"I'm looking forward very much to being present at the signing of the agreement. It is a very historic occasion and a culmination of two years' hard work by a very large number of people," Sir Edward told reporters at the airport.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is scheduled to arrive here Tuesday night. The next day, she and Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang will sign the joint declaration, initiated in Peking on Sept. 26.

The agreement heralds the end of British sovereignty over the bustling free port on China's south-east coast, a colonial presence that began in 1841.

Under the pact, China will recover Hong Kong in 1997 when Britain's lease on the new territories — 99 per cent of the colony's land mass — expires.

The Communist government in Peking promises to preserve Hong Kong's capitalist and legal systems for 50 years after 1997, and to give the colony's 5.5 million people a large degree of autonomy as a "special administrative region."

Sir Edward was a member of the British negotiating team.

Hong Kong shipping magnate Y.K. PAO arrived on Sir Edward's plane, a scheduled Chinese flight.

Some 100 other Hong Kong government, business and industry, labour and legal representatives were due to arrive Tuesday to witness the signing at Peking's invitation.

The official Chinese News Agency Xinhua issued a positive economic analysis from Hong Kong Monday, noting that in contrast to the currency and stock market fluctuations of the past two years, the outlook has brightened since Sept. 26.

"The initialing of the joint declaration has put an end to the two-year chaos," the agency said. "Most local residents regard the joint declaration as better than expected."

It noted the property market rally after the joint declaration stated that private ownership would be protected by law and the land deed period would be extended until the year 2047.

The agency detailed new investment projects by the Bank of America, Texaco, Sprague Electric Co. and other major firms. "This is because the document ensures Hong Kong's political stability, fine investment environment, low tax rates, free trade, non-restrictions on entry and exit of foreign exchange and gold, as well as good transport and information services," Xinhua said.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♦ 2 ♦
What action do you take?
Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♦ 2 ♦
What action do you take?
Q.7—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♦ 2 ♦
What action do you take?
Q.8—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.9—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.10—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.11—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.12—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.13—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.14—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
Q.15—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♥A3 ♦10654 ♣97542
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?

COLUMN

Illiterate recites epic from memory

PEKING (R) — An illiterate Tibetan girl is reciting one of the world's greatest epics to transcribers in Lhasa in order to preserve it, the Beijing Review said Monday. It said the girl, Yumei, turned up in the People's Publishing House in Tibet four years ago. "To everyone's amusement, she sincerely declared she was able to recite and sing 76 volumes of the great deeds of King Gesar and wanted to publish the book," it reported. Within two months the publishers had set down 210,000 characters of the traditional epic, which Yumei learned from her ballad-singer father. By August she had dictated 700,000 characters of the epic about an ancient Tibetan emperor. The English-language weekly did not give Yumei's age or say in which language the epic was being recorded.

Italian baby has AIDS

BRESCIA, Italy (R) — A two-and-a-half-year-old child was taken to hospital suffering from the killer disease AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), hospital sources in this northern Italian town said. The sources said the child's father is serving a jail sentence on drugs charges, and the disease was almost certainly transmitted by the parents. AIDS, which has usually proved fatal, has been most prevalent among homosexuals, intravenous drug users and Haitians. The child, whose identity has been kept secret, was being attended by a team of specialists and its condition was said to have improved slightly.

KKK sends computerised hate messages

NEW YORK (R) — The Ku Klux Klan is utilising 20th Century wizardry to get its message across to the American public, Newsweek magazine reported. Grand wizards of the white supremacist, anti-black and anti-jewish Klan, no longer indulge in cross-burnings and wearing the traditional white sheets, the magazine said. Instead their messages of hate are now flashed on home computer screens. The Aryan National Liberty Network, a Klan organisation, offers a number of computer "bulletin boards," priced at \$5 each. One such bulletin board, titled "Know your enemy," lists U.S. Communist Party offices and what it describes as "ZOG (Zionist Occupational Government) informers," the report said.

Soviet scientist dies

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet scientist and academician Valery Popkov, who worked in the field of electrophysics, has died aged 76, the Official News Agency TASS reported Sunday. Popkov, who died last Wednesday, studied at the Moscow Institute of Energetics before going on to develop the basis of modern high and super-high voltage lines and high-voltage equipment. Awarded the prestigious Order of Lenin, he also contributed to the development of electron-ion technology for insulating coating in heavy electrical fields.

Bulgaria reportedly makes 'fake Scotch' whisky

LONDON (AP) — Communist Bulgaria was accused Monday of producing fake Scotch whisky. Britain's big business organisation, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), said that Bulgarian authorities failed to act against manufacturers of counterfeit Johnnie Walker Scotch after a shipment of 22,500 cases of the bogus liquor was seized by customs men earlier this year at the Italian port of Ancona. The CBI said transport documents showed the goods were dispatched from the Bulgarian capital of Sofia by Desped, the country's state forwarding company. The bottles had fake Johnnie Walker labels that lacked the words "Produce of Scotland," but everything else, bottles, caps, and cardboard cases, closely resembled the real thing, a CBI spokesman said. Distillers Co. which makes Johnnie Walker said the smell and colour of the Bulgarian product are like Scotch, but it is a mixture of chemical alcohol and a whisky base. The CBI said it asked Bulgaria's London embassy to request that remaining stocks be impounded and the embassy promised an investigation.

UNESCO faces spending cuts unless members voluntarily boost contributions

KUWAIT (R) — The head of UNESCO has said the United Nations body would have to slice its spending because of the withdrawal of the United States unless other members voluntarily increased contributions to its budget.

But Director-General Amadou Mahtar M'Bow was confident UNESCO (U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) would survive the withdrawal of the U.S., which provides 25 per cent of its budget.

He told a news conference he regretted the U.S. decision to leave UNESCO at the end of 1984, but added: "We will survive."

He hoped some member states would raise their contributions to offset the drop in revenues resulting from the U.S. move but he did not know which of the remaining 160 members would do so.

Mr. M'Bow, who was in Kuwait to take part in an Islamic seminar, said although UNESCO faced the loss of U.S. funding, it would retain access to U.S. expertise through continued cooperation with American experts and scientists on an individual basis.

The U.S. served notice last year it would quit UNESCO amid reports Washington was unhappy with alleged politicisation, inefficiency and mismanagement within the U.N. body.

Britain warned earlier this month it too might leave the organisation next year because of objections to UNESCO programmes relating to com-

munications and human rights policies.

Mr. M'Bow dismissed as baseless charges which he said alleged UNESCO was seeking to limit the freedom of the press or restrict journalistic licence.

"I challenge anybody to prove that the UNESCO's programme involved any such practices," he said.

Its communications programme was intended to balance the information flow from North to South and help developing countries relay their own image to the world, he said.

At present, 85 per cent of this information was relayed by what he called a monopoly of five Western news agencies.

Public appeals for peace in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (R) — Buddhist monks and Christian priests joined a public appeal Monday for an end to Sri Lanka's bloodshed which has killed about 400 people in the last month.

Dozens of monks and priests were among 1,500 prominent Sri Lankan citizens calling for peace on the island plagued by separatist guerrilla violence.

The dead include scores of civilians killed since guerrillas, fighting for a separate minority Tamil state, stepped up attacks a month ago.

Unrest between the majority Sinhalese and the Tamils has erupted in bloody violence several times since the Indian Ocean island gained independence from Britain in 1948.

The citizens appealed to the government and political groups to "get together immediately and agree on a negotiated solution that ensures peace with justice and fair play to all."

In a full page press advertisement in the island newspaper, they said violence and military action would not solve ethnic unrest.

The appeal came as President Junius Jayewardene sought national backing for a peace plan he

announced on Friday to ease tensions between the two communities.

The plan would grant Tamils a measure of autonomy in areas they predominate and it proposes the creation of a second legislative chamber, including minority representation.

Mr. Jayewardene told the ruling United National Party (UNP) on Saturday he was prepared to hold a referendum or general election to test public opinion on the plan.

The island newspaper reported Monday that a powerful group in the UNP favours a general election on the issue.

Pakistani leader winds up referendum campaign

ISLAMABAD (R) — President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq Monday ended a campaign tour of Pakistan ahead of Wednesday's snap referendum on his Islamic policies in which apathy appears to be his main opponent.

Gen. Zia, seeking a five-year mandate through the polls on his Islamisation policies, held 10 days of public meetings during which he made campaign promises and received praise bordering on a personality cult.

In addition to identical patriotic and pro-Islamic appeals at more than 20 meetings, his speeches also showed concern about turnout of voters, women's participation and justification for his policies.

The outlawed opposition, which has been banned from publishing its call for a boycott of the poll, made a disorganised and apparently unsuccessful attempt to arouse Pakistanis against the poll.

"They are not interested, because they know Zia will win any-

way," a disappointed opposition politician said. "Zia's real challenge now is to get them out to vote."

Voters will be asked if they support Gen. Zia's efforts to enforce Islamic laws and hold general elections by March.

A majority "yes" vote will ensure Gen. Zia, who seized power in 1977, a further five-year term. He has promised to relinquish power if he loses.

The government has mobilised local officials, Islamic tax assessors and public prayer monitors to get people to vote and requisitioned buses and trucks to transport them to the polls.

"Everybody is working on it — the army, the bureaucracy, the intelligence services, transporters, clergy," said a local council representative.

The government also launched a major voter registration drive and is considering dropping its requirement that voters must

show a national identity because many Pakistanis do not have one.

The Islamabad daily Muslim said the government was aiming for a 40 to 45 per cent turnout while opposition leaders estimate turnout at between five to 25 per cent.

Gen. Zia has made special appeals to women voters and relaxed their identity checks so those wearing the traditional Muslim veil do not have to have photographs on their identity cards.

Gen. Zia has stressed what he says are women's enhanced rights under Islam, apparently countering criticism by more liberal women activists that new Islamic laws reduce their status.

Most campaign audiences have had large women's sections, segregated by tradition from the men, and women speakers were given prominent television coverage.

Gen. Zia, saying the referendum is to ensure further Islamisation rather than to extend his term in office, repeatedly har-

ked back to the prolonged and bloody unrest before 1977 as justification for what he has done since then.

He said the nine-party Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), which demonstrated against former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for rigging the 1977 polls, was a movement for the Islamic policies he has introduced. Mr. Bhutto was later hanged.

From their statements of support, Gen. Zia appears to have won over some of the PNA's constituency of businessmen, small traders and urban middle class and the traditional political parties now in the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) appear increasingly isolated.

"But it will be increasingly difficult for the president and the government to function in a vacuum," the Muslim warned. "He has to allow others to play on a turf whose ground rules he himself will set."